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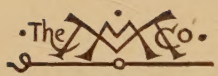
VOLUME II



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FERRY AT COUNCIL BLUFFS.

Emigrant wagons being carried across the Missouri from Kanesville to winter quarters. The women are unpacking their chests and deciding which of their possessions to leave behind. Goods for the journey across the Plains were packed in bags.

ECONOMIC BEGINNINGS OF THE FAR WEST

HOW WE WON THE LAND
BEYOND THE MISSISSIPPI

↑ 932942

BY

KATHARINE COMAN

AUTHOR OF
"THE INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES"

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vol. 2

VOLUME II

AMERICAN SETTLERS

Illustrated

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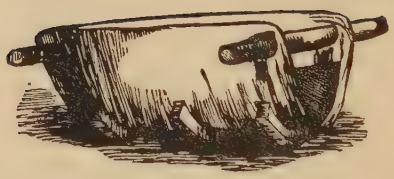
PART III

THE ADVANCE OF THE SETTLERS



A Miner's Rocker in 1848

ECONOMIC BEGINNINGS OF THE FAR WEST

CHAPTER I

LOUISIANA

The acquisition of Louisiana Territory got rid of some long-standing difficulties and opened to American enterprise vast possibilities of extension. Both banks of the Mississippi were now controlled by the United States, and the free navigation of that great waterway was assured for all time. Not only the Father of Waters, but his western tributaries, the Missouri, the Platte, the Arkansas and Red rivers, were brought within reach of our restless frontiersmen, and they made haste to avail themselves of this outlet for their energy. In the *Account of Louisiana*, compiled at the suggestion of President Jefferson in 1803 and widely distributed throughout the country, there was gathered for the information of the curious all that was then known of the population and resources of the new acquisition. According to the Spanish census of 1799, there were in the settlements along the Mississippi and Red rivers forty-two thousand three hundred and seventy-five souls, of whom two-thirds were whites and one-third slaves or freedmen. New Orleans was a town of ten thousand inhabitants, where four-fifths of the whites were French creoles and the remainder English and Americans. The people of Baton Rouge, Iberville,

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and Point Coupée were the Acadians banished from Nova Scotia by the British government. The villages on Red River — Avoyelles, Rapide, Natchitoches — were settled by descendants of the original French. So, too, was the Post aux Arkansas and Ouichita on

French Louisiana in 1804.

Black River. In Spanish Illinois or Upper Louisiana, along the great river that furnished the only practicable highway, were a dozen flourishing settlements — Petite Prairie, Ste. Genevieve, New Madrid, Cape Girardeau, Carondelet, St. Louis, St. Charles, St. André — where were gathered a total

of six thousand people, of whom not more than one-sixth were blacks. St. Louis was still a mere trading post with nine hundred and twenty-five inhabitants, of whom one-third were slaves. St. Charles and Ste. Genevieve, being farming communities, had a larger proportion of whites. Here the *habitants* driven from Illinois by the American occupation were maintaining existence by means of an indolent agriculture varied by hunting and fishing. At St. André, McKay's bailiwick, some thirty families from Kentucky were cultivating the soil in a fashion that put their French neighbors to shame. Years before the annexation, pioneers from Kentucky and Tennessee had begun moving across the river, until, in 1803, "at least two-fifths if not a greater proportion of all settlers on the Spanish side of the Mississippi, in the Illinois country, are . . . supposed to be Americans." [1]

The products of the rich lands along the lower Mississippi were sugar,[2] molasses, cotton, and indigo; those of Upper Louisiana, peltry, lumber, lead, horses, and cattle. The annual value of the cotton exported was estimated at $1,344,000, that of sugar at $302,400, molasses at $32,000, peltry at $200,000, lumber at $80,000. "The peltry procured in the Illinois is the best sent to the Atlantic market; and the quantity is very considerable. Lead is to be had with ease, and in such quantities as to supply all Europe, if the population were sufficient to work the numerous mines to be found within two or three feet from the surface in various parts of the country." [3] For a considerable distance back from the river, the land

was extraordinarily productive and was covered with valuable timber. "It may be said with truth that, for fertility of soil, no part of the world exceeds the borders of the Mississippi; the land yields an abundance of all the necessaries of life, and almost spontaneously; very little labor being required in the cultivation of the earth. That part of Upper Louisiana, which borders on North Mexico, is one immense prairie; it produces nothing but grass; it is filled with buffalo, deer, and other kinds of game; the land is represented as too rich for the growth of forest trees." [4]

Jefferson's *Account* was corroborated by a letter written under date of August 15, 1803, by Dr. John Sibley and printed at Raleigh, North Carolina, soon after. Dr. Sibley was a Carolinian who had settled at Natchez in 1802 and obtained permission of the Spanish authorities to travel in Louisiana. "Travelling up the Mississippi some months ago, I took pains to ascertain the number of sugar plantations, and the average quantity of sugar made annually in each. I found 14 below New Orleans, and 64 above, in all 78; and they average annually about 75,000 pounds' weight of sugar, besides a proportionable quantity of rum and molasses." The alluvial lands for sixty miles above New Orleans and for sixty miles below that town, together with Terre Bœuf, the bayou St. John, the bayou La Faussee, and Tuckepa, were equally well adapted to the growing of cane, and might, he estimated, afford place for one thousand plantations. "The lands from the edge of the river back, gradually fall till they become too low

to cultivate; it never can admit of but one row of settlements. These plantations are interchangeably planted in sugar cane, rice, corn and cotton. Nothing can exceed the luxuriancy of their crops." The coast lands were equally fertile. "The population of this district is 965 families; they have large stocks of very large-sized cattle, make considerable sugar and cotton for exportation." To the north between the coast and the Red River lay Appalusa, "a high, rich and beautiful country, skirted with clumps of flourishing trees, and interspersed with fine rich prairies,[5] which produce corn and cotton in great perfection. But the immense flocks of cattle[6] with which they are covered, are almost incredible; ten thousand head may be seen in one view." The upper country was no less promising. "The lands of Red River alone are capable of producing more tobacco than is now made in all the United States, and at less than one fourth part of the labour; and in all Louisiana, I think more than ten times as much cotton might be made as in the United States. The extreme fertility of this country, the vast quantities of flour, beef, pork, tobacco, sugar, etc., which it would yield, with the productions of its mines, independent of the disposal of vast quantities of vacant lands under no claims, render the acquisition of it to the United States of importance almost exceeding calculation."[7]

Hardly had the *Account of Louisiana* left the press when a survey of the less known portions of the new territory was inaugurated by a congressional appropriation for the exploration of the Red and Arkansas rivers. The definition of the boundary

between Louisiana and the Spanish dominions and the investigation of the resources of the arid plains that lay beyond the settlements, where were said to be herds of cattle and horses, salines without number and mines of silver and gold, seemed to warrant such an enterprise. In the same message in which he announced Lewis and Clark's achievements to Congress (February 19, 1806), Jefferson communicated the results of this less brilliant but no less significant exploration. Dr. John Sibley had been commissioned to ascend the Red River, while William Dunbar and George Hunter were sent up its principal tributary, the Washita.[8]

In an open boat, accompanied by a French half-breed, Francis Grappe, Dr. Sibley pushed up the Red River to Natchitoches, the old French settlement, and seventy miles beyond to near the present site of Shreveport. All along the right or north bank he found American settlers, developing cotton farms. There were two French towns on the south bank of the river, Izavial, with two hundred and ninety-six families, and Rapide, with one hundred. The land was very rich and bore heavy crops of corn and cotton. "It is perfectly level, resembling a river bed, the soil twenty feet deep, and like a bed of manure." "It is impossible to conceive of more beautiful fields and plantations, or more luxuriant crops of corn, cotton and tobacco." Sibley described the country below Natchitoches as the richest he had ever seen. "The low grounds of Red River are generally five or six miles wide, and no soil can be richer, and nearly all alike; considerable part of which is overflowed

annually in the month of April; but it continues up but a short time, and always falls in time to plant corn and tobacco, and rises no more till the same time the next year. There are fields that from the best account I can obtain, have been planted successively for near one hundred years in corn or tobacco, and never known to fail in producing plentiful crops, nor is the soil apparently in the least exhausted. It is particularly favorable for tobacco, which grows remarkably luxuriant, and has a very fine flavor. The soil has a saline impregnation, which imparts something of it to the tobacco. The well and river water is somewhat brackish. I am convinced that one hand here can make as much tobacco in a season as four or five on the best lands in Virginia or North Carolina. It is made without any hills being raised, and grows so thick (from the strength and warmth of the soil) that they usually cut it three times. When prepared for market, it is stemmed and made into twists of five pounds each. From eighty to one hundred bushels of corn can be made to the acre. Cotton produces equally well. The gardens on the natural soil (for they cannot be made richer with manure) are not less astonishing or extraordinary. I have particularly observed the very great height to which the artichoke grows; they are usually ten feet and very frequently twelve and fifteen feet high." [9]

At Baker's Landing, a mingled population of French, Irish, and Americans were cultivating the prairie to corn and cotton, while their hogs and cattle found abundant food in the oak forest.

Wheat would thrive in the fertile soil, but it was not grown because there were no mills for grinding flour. Large plantations were also in evidence where corn, cotton, and tobacco were raised for sale, and at Lac Moir were salt-works where two crippled old men with a dozen pots and kettles made six bushels of salt per day, enough to supply the whole region. Saline springs were abundant, and a Captain Burnett had brought negro slaves up the river, meaning to exploit this industry.

Dr. Sibley turned back far short of the source of Red River, but from a Frenchman, Brevel, who had been bred among the Pamis, he learned that the upper river was not navigable. The Indians themselves had no boats, partly because there was no timber available and partly because the treacherous current, fairly disappearing in the dry season and rising to a torrent with the spring and autumn floods, made even canoes an uncertain means of transportation. They relied rather on horses, with which they were well furnished, and on which they hunted the wild bison of the plains. Brevel had accompanied his Indian friends as far west as the Spanish settlements in the Rio Grande Valley. He estimated the distance from the Pima villages to be some three hundred miles. Sibley thought that the most valuable land on Red River began about sixty miles above the upper settlements (seventy miles above Rapide) and extended four hundred miles beyond. "About eighty or ninety years ago, a number of Frenchmen settled on this part of Red River; they built a merchant mill, with burr stones (which they brought

from France) and cultivated wheat in the prairies with much success, and made excellent flour for several years, till, by the repeated incursions of the Oza, they were compelled to abandon their settlements." The Spaniards, too, had attempted to develop this region, sending some priests and soldiers with several families, but the post was destroyed by these same Indians. Natchitoches, according to Sibley, was a "small, irregular, and meanly built village" with not more than half a dozen good houses. It had been a considerable settlement, but the better people had moved to farms, leaving some forty families, mostly French, in possession of the decaying public buildings. "From this place the great western road takes off toward Mexico, and it will ever be an important place, being the key to an immense rich country."

Dunbar reported that the French settlements along the Washita had well-nigh disappeared, the people having fled after the Natchez massacre. At the mouth of Black River he found an old Frenchman in charge of a ferry for the transportation of the occasional travellers who followed the trail between Natchez and Natchitoches. At the army post farther up the river was a small settlement — some five hundred souls — eking out a miserable subsistence by hunting deer and bear for peltry. There was a rich alluvial soil, but they raised only a little corn and were content to buy everything else of the traders who, taking advantage of their ignorance, charged them high prices for imported goods while giving them little for the hides and bear's grease

they offered in exchange. Considerable estates had been granted by the Spanish government to certain French refugees — royalists —, but the validity of these titles was questioned. Dunbar and Hunter followed the windings of the Washita to the Hot Springs. The healing qualities of these waters were already known, and the place was a resort for health-seekers. From this their farthest point, they saw the mountains that divide the Washita from the streams that flow into the Arkansas. At the head waters of the Arkansas, so the hunters told them, silver ore was to be found, and the river was navigable almost to its source. An old Dutchman showed them a pin that had been wrought from silver found by a trapper in the mountains that divide the eastward-flowing rivers from the Rio Grande del Norte of the Spaniards. French fur traders told Dunbar that the Platte or Shallow River took its rise in these same mountains near the source of the Arkansas and Red rivers. They described with enthusiasm the beauty of the country that lay to the west of the Mississippi — gentle rolling prairie, timberless except for the trees that grew along the river bottoms, but clothed with verdure, buffalo grass, and myriad flowers. The climate was dry and wholesome, the rains temperate, — never so violent as to destroy crops, — and the arid regions near the mountains were refreshed with nightly dews. Numberless herds of bison ranged these prairies, moving hither and thither in search of water and pasture. No good hunter need go long without food.

Dr. Sibley gives a careful account of the Indian tribes in the Red River region; peoples most of whom have long since disappeared. Intertribal war, conflicts with the French, and the small-pox might account, in his opinion, for the rapid extinction of the natives. The Comanches were then, as for long after, the scourge of the plains. Sibley thought them inclined to be friendly to the French and Americans, but gives abundant evidence of their hostility to the Spaniards. They made a pastime of stealing not only horses, but children. There were many white slaves in the lodges of the Comanches, some of whom were captured so young that they knew nothing of their origin.

A supplementary expedition of more formidable proportions was despatched up Red River in the year 1806. Two army officers, Captains Sparks and Humphreys, seventeen privates, and a black servant, together with Thomas Freeman, a surveyor, and Dr. Peter Custis, a naturalist, made up the party. They embarked on May 3, in two flat-bottomed barges and a pirogue, and reached the westernmost white settlement, forty-five miles above Natchitoches, without incident. Here they were overtaken by an Indian runner sent by Dr. Sibley, now Indian agent at Natchitoches, with the news that Spanish dragoons were marching from Nacogdoches to intercept the Americans. The Caddoes, near whose village the Spanish force was encamped, also gave warning; but Sparks' instructions had been to explore the river to its source unless stopped by a force superior to his own, and he pushed on. A few

days brought him face to face with a body of three hundred mounted troopers. Freeman's attempt to explain that their object in ascending the river was purely scientific proved vain, and it became clear that they could not proceed without a battle. Deeming discretion the better part of valor, the party retreated down the river, after having attained a point about six hundred and thirty-five miles above its mouth. Freeman thought the country along the upper river "would become as desirable as any portion of the earth," if the stream were cleared of driftwood and the swamps and bayous drained. The Caddo Indians were raising corn, — fifty and sixty bushels to the acre, — and they said that farther west lay "level, rich and almost continued prairies, where range immense herds of buffalo, upon which the Indians almost entirely subsist, moving their camps as these animals migrate with the season from north to south and back again." [10]

The United States government had every reason to congratulate itself and the country on the addition of Louisiana Territory to the national domain. The customs revenue at the port of New Orleans, for example, amounted to $1,000,000 a year — seven per cent interest on the purchase price — while the potential wealth represented in the new industrial resources was beyond computation. Citizens of the Western states, who were beginning to feel the need of elbow room, hurried to Louisiana to take advantage of the promising openings, commercial and agricultural. The Americans found New Orleans a delightfully picturesque town, and quite unlike any-

thing in the United States. The roomy one-story houses, finished in stucco — white, yellow, and pink — surrounded by fig and orange orchards, seemed most attractive. The earth was wholly alluvial without grit or stones, the streets were none of them paved, and after a hard rain they became sloughs of black, loamy, greasy mud and quite impassable. A single line of logs served, at one and the same time, as sewer and footway. The levee, which furnished the only handsome street, was shaded with willow and orange trees and furnished a public promenade. The usual vehicles were the high wooden-wheeled carts in which the peasants brought their vegetables to market, and these squeaked through the streets with an intolerable racket; but this had been encouraged by the Spanish intendant because it served to warn the customs collector of the advent of dutiable goods.

With quite different emotions was the cession regarded by the creole population of Louisiana. Notably at New Orleans, where the officers and civil officials of the Spanish régime were gathered, there was a strong anti-American feeling, and the belief was general that the province would shortly be retroceded to Spain. The task imposed on Governor Claiborne was indeed a difficult one. He had to deal with a people of whom not a tithe were American in origin or in sentiment. The great proportion were irreconcilably foreign in blood, language, religion, and customs.[11] The common law and trial by jury were suspicious innovations; the few American officials, always overbearing and often

incompetent, were highly unpopular; the restrictions on the importation of slaves, promulgated with the territorial organization, were regarded as disastrous by the planters; while the proud and ambitious creoles of New Orleans resented the territorial status and demanded that they be admitted to the "enjoyment of all the rights, advantages, and immunities of citizens of the United States" . . . "as soon as possible," in accordance with the terms of the cession. The founding of a bank of Louisiana, authorized to issue paper money in lieu of the silver hitherto imported from Vera Cruz, roused the distrust of the merchants, while the appointment of a register of lands with a view to testing the validity of grants made by the Spanish intendants subsequent to the treaty, spread alarm through the rural communities. The investigation of titles was a godsend to the lawyers, who flocked into the territory from all quarters, but to the litigation-hating Louisianians it promised endless disturbance. The supplanted Spanish officials were loath to leave the province, and did not hesitate to use their influence against the new order, while certain Americans long resident in New Orleans were distinctly pro-Spanish in sympathy. The Territory of Orleans was but a narrow strip of American domain driven like a wedge into the Spanish dominions, dividing the Floridas from Texas. New Orleans lay open to attack from the Gulf, while the bays and islands along the coast offered convenient shelter to an enemy. The governors of the adjacent Spanish territories were openly hostile,

The Teche.

A Creole Cottage.
Acadia.

troops were gathering at Nacogdoches and supplies were being landed at Mobile, while there was reason to believe that the Indians between the Arkansas and Red rivers were being corrupted by the agents of the viceroy himself.

Under these conditions, it is no marvel that Governor Claiborne, harassed on every side, lent a credulous ear to General Wilkinson's assertion that Aaron Burr was proposing to take advantage of the general disaffection, make a descent on New Orleans and, on the basis of that conquest, build up an empire of the south to which the restless communities between the Mississippi and the Ohio would eventually be annexed. It is now clear that Burr's nebulous plots were directed against New Spain and that few if any of the denizens of New Orleans were in his confidence; but the charge of treason had sufficient basis to be credited at Washington, and it served to increase the distrust of the creole population and to postpone until 1812 the creation of the state of Louisiana.

During the last ten years of the Spanish régime, traffic in slaves was permitted in Spanish bottoms, and three slave traders, all French, came into the port of New Orleans, bringing four hundred and sixty-three negroes. The coming of the Americans, with the prospect of more extensive exploitation of the agricultural possibilities of Louisiana, greatly increased the demand for slaves. Hence the new regulation imposing a fine of $300 on each slave imported and setting free the illicit chattels was vigorously protested, and Congress was induced to

modify the embargo by limiting the restriction to vessels clearing from foreign ports. Thereafter traders stopped at Charleston and then proceeded undisturbed to Mobile and New Orleans. Thirty-nine thousand Africans were so brought in between 1803 and 1808. At the same time, the numerous islands and bayous of the coast offered safe harborage for smugglers, and thousands of slaves were driven overland through Texas. The Cuban exiles (5797) who came to New Orleans in 1809, brought with them 1991 slaves, and these were admitted despite the law, on the plea that they were refugees. The gathering of hundreds of these semi-barbarians on remote plantations with only a handful of white men in control, was felt to be a menace to public safety, and the slave revolt of 1811 was so formidable as to necessitate the calling out of Federal troops. The "Police of Slaves," ordained by Carondelet, was reënacted as a black code, with intent to keep this dangerous element of the population in due subordination. Concourses of negroes were forbidden under heavy penalty, and no slave was allowed off his master's plantation without a written permit. Slaves were forbidden to ride horseback or to carry arms, and no liquor was to be sold to them. On the other hand the supply of food and clothing was fixed by law, and the degree of punishment was limited to thirty lashes in any one day.

To the people of Louisiana, the all-important factor, more influential than soil or climate or rainfall in determining their industrial fate, was the Mississippi River. The mighty stream had created

the land on which they dwelt, washing down every year from the uplands and prairies drained by its fifty-four tributaries hundreds of thousands of tons of silt which, deposited along its channel or spread out in wide alluvions by the spring floods, had formed in the course of ages the vast delta between the Ozarks and the Appalachians. From Cape Girardeau, a jutting promontory of the ancient gulf shore, the river ran through swamps and bayous of its own making, twisting and writhing from bank to bank, shifting its current with every flood and playing havoc with the puny devices of man. Navigation was rendered difficult by the transient sandbars that were carried hither and yon with the caprices of the current, and by the ever present driftwood, whether lodged against some obstacle or floating with the stream and alternately lifted and submerged in its uneasy balance, the "planters" and "sawyers" of river parlance. Whirlpools and eddies and cross currents play sport with modern steamers, guided by experienced pilots who follow charts and buoys. In frontier days, many a heavily laden flatboat or keel was wrecked against snag or shoal as it floated down stream, while the upstream voyage, laboriously performed by aid of oar and pole and *cordelle*, seemed an endless task.

To the settler on the bottom-lands, the Mississippi was no less a whimsical tyrant. For the greater part of its course below Madrid, the bed of the river was elevated many feet above the surrounding plain by the continual deposit of silt on the bottom and sides of the channel, so that it flowed through a self-made

viaduct. On either side, this was flanked by swamps and stagnant lagoons bordered by canebrakes which gave way in turn to forests of cypress trees hung with dark gray streamers of Spanish moss. No animal life throve except alligators, moccasin snakes, and the pestilential mosquito. An occasional bear came down in search of food, and Indian hunters might follow after. In May, the month of high water, the whole region was inundated and appeared a shoreless sea. As the waters ate into the causeway here and there, the barrier was undermined, the banks caved in, and hundreds and thousands of acres of the richest farm land were swept away down the river. From the time of the French settlement, the necessity of dyking the stream had been the paramount concern of every landowner. Each planter raised an embankment sufficient to guard his fields against flood and strove to make connection with the plantations above and below him. Thus these slave-built levees were gradually extended on both sides the river, forming what was called the "Coast." Here lay the sugar and cotton plantations which constituted the wealth of Louisiana; *e.g.* that of M. Poydras of Point Coupée, employing five hundred slaves and worth $2,000,000, and that of Wade Hampton, with an annual crop of five hundred hogsheads of sugar and one thousand bales of cotton and worth $150,000. The income of the ordinary planter was from $20,000 to $40,000 a year, and land sold for $75 an acre, an extraordinary price for the frontier. When Timothy Flint went down the Mississippi in 1822, the levees began at Baton Rouge, one hundred and fifty miles

above New Orleans and, from that point to sixty miles below the city, the plantations lay in a continuous stretch of cultivated land on both sides of the river. "The breadth of the cultivated lands is generally two miles; a perfectly uniform strip, conforming to the shape of the river, and everywhere bounding the deep forests of the Mississippi swamp with a regular line. In the whole distance to New Orleans, plantation touches plantation. I have seen in no part of the United States such a rich and highly cultivated tract of the same extent. It far exceeds that on the banks of the Delaware. Noble houses, massive sugar-houses, neat summer-houses, and numerous negro villages succeed each other in such a way that the whole distance has the appearance of one continued village." [12]

New Orleans, the port of this great alluvial valley, had, to Flint's mind, an unexcelled commercial opportunity, superior to that of New York. The winter population was already from forty to fifty thousand, three times that of 1803. The sole deterrent to the prosperity of New Orleans was its unwholesome climate. The hot and pestilential summers drove out of the city all who had the means to get away. Six thousand persons were carried off by the yellow fever epidemic of 1819, most of them newcomers from the North and from Europe. The surrounding district was hardly more healthful. "Betwixt the fears of inundation, the efforts of the enslaved Africans to emancipate themselves, and the fatality of the climate, the opulent planters of Louisiana" were ill at ease.[13] New Orleans was still a foreign-looking

city with stucco houses, frescoed white and yellow, and the French were "the same gay, dancing, spectacle-loving race that they are everywhere else." The Americans came only to make money which they meant to spend elsewhere, hence they did not live in the showy, extravagant style of the creoles, and stayed as short a time as might be in a climate that was far more disastrous to them than to the natives. Race antagonism was still serious and resulted in frequent broils. The mixture of races was strikingly displayed in the vegetable market. "In a pleasant March forenoon, you see, perhaps, half the city there. The crowd covers half a mile in extent. The negroes, mulattoes, French, Spanish, Germans are all crying their articles in their several tongues." [14] The picturesque foreignness of the market was repeated on the river which was "crowded with the boats of French and Spanish pedlars, not much larger than perogues, but fitted up with a cabin, covered deck, and sails." [15] There, too, were the flatboats of the Kentuckians, loaded with flour, bacon, and whiskey, and manned by brawny frontiersmen, — boats battered and men gaunt with the vicissitudes of the three months' voyage. The first cargoes might be expected early in January when, arriving in advance of the glut, they could sell their flour at $12.50 a barrel.

The business of the place centred on the river front. Already in 1820 there were sometimes fifty steamboats lying in the harbor at one time, and from twelve to fifteen hundred flatboats moored along the wharves. The freight capacity of one of these

Flatboats and Steamboat on the Mississippi.

latter frequently reached sixty tons. Communication with the interior by steamboat was "easy, pleasant, and rapid." More than one hundred steamers were navigating the Mississippi and its principal tributaries. They were large side-wheelers for the most part, with excellent passenger accommodations and ample freight capacity. The coast trade with Mobile and Florida was carried on by three hundred schooners. Already more cotton was shipped from this port than from any other in America, and immense piles of cotton bales lay along the levee, waiting for an ocean steamer to carry them to New York, New England, or Europe. Sugar was a great and increasing crop, and Flint believed that enough might be grown in Louisiana to meet the consumption of the United States. There were very productive plantations on the Bayou Teche, along the Gulf Coast, and on the adjacent islands. Each sluggish stream and bayou formed its own embankment of rich, black soil, and the plantations were crowded into the fertile strip running from one to three miles back from the water. The growth reminded Flint of the rank cornfields of Missouri. The soil and climate of Louisiana were admirably suited to the development of the stalk, but it contained less saccharine matter than that grown in Cuba, and the seed cane must be planted every year, at considerable cost in time and labor. The most serious obstacle, however, was the scarcity of capital. A heavy investment was required for the sugar-houses (as large and imposing as New England factories), and for the purchase and maintenance of the force of

slaves. Rice and indigo had been cultivated formerly of a quality superior to the Georgia yield; corn, sweet potatoes, melons, figs, and oranges, and all northern fruits, except apples, flourished; but the planters found more money profit in sugar and cotton, especially the former, so they were neglecting all other crops and "calculated to supply themselves with provisions almost entirely from the upper country." [16] Natchez was the up-country cotton market. At the shipping season a thousand boats of all descriptions, from the Pittsburgh-built steamboat to the log raft, lay at this landing, the town was full of boatmen, and the streets were almost barricaded with cotton bales.

Negroes were everywhere. Slave labor was deemed essential to the cultivation of cotton and sugar in a climate that was enervating to the whites. Without it, men believed, the land would relapse to wilderness. Flint, New England clergyman though he was, found himself agreeing with this point of view. "The slaves appeared to me to be as well fed and clothed as the labouring poor at the North." They were far better off physically than in the upper country, for their strength and contentment was the chief factor in prosperity, and it was the planter's interest that they should be kept in good bodily condition. Adequate food and shelter were provided for these valuable animals, as well as hospitals for the sick and regular medical attendance. The freed blacks led a wretched existence, Flint thought. They had few opportunities of earning an honest living and readily took to thieving and vice. Unlike the

plantation negroes, they had "the wretched privilege of getting drunk."[17] The poor whites of the upper river set them a demoralizing example, as did also the mongrel population, French and Spanish mixed with Indian blood, who were "vagabonds almost to a man." "Scarcely any of them have any regular occupation, unless it be that of herding cattle; but they raise a little maize, and fish a little, and hunt a little, and smoke and lounge a great deal."[18]

Timothy Flint, going up to Natchitoches in 1820, found flourishing plantations all the way. The climate was not warm enough for sugar-cane, but the cotton plant grew as high as a man's head and yielded two bales to the acre. Wheat grew eighty bushels to the acre, and the selling price was $3.50 per bushel. Alexandria was the market for the parish of Rapide and the upper river since the rapids prevented steamers going farther except in high water, when they ventured to Natchitoches. Above that point the Great Raft proved an insuperable barrier for all craft larger than the pirogues, which went on to the United States garrison at Kiamesha. From Natchitoches a lively trade was conducted with San Antonio, Monclava, and the City of Mexico. Mules laden with silver were driven over the Camino Real, and horses bred by the Texas *rancheros* were sold to the merchants, who sent them to the farmers of Missouri and Kentucky. This frontier town was, moreover, a harbor of refuge for criminals, both Spanish and American.

Louisiana was not all cane, corn, and cotton. Two-thirds of the state was swamp and pine barren.

To the west and north the land was high and the soil thin and sandy. Here great droves of cattle and hogs fattened on the mast and native grasses, settlements were few and far apart, and "there being little call for labor, the inhabitants labor little, and are content with indolence, health and poverty." [19]

CHAPTER II

MISSOURI TERRITORY

The watershed of the Arkansas River was not regarded as a hopeful opportunity for the pioneer. For an unknown distance back from the Mississippi, the land was low and flat, and the rivers flowed sluggishly through vast swamps or widened out into lakes and bayous, infested by alligators and mosquitoes and overhung by malarial vapors, poisonous to persons not habituated to the climate. Here grew nothing that could be made to serve man's needs except the funereal cypress, and no industry might be developed except that of the wood-cutters who shipped scow-loads of lumber and fuel to New Orleans. The Arkansas River was navigable for keel-boats for two hundred miles, and the Washita, Black, White and St. Francis served the purposes of commerce, except where the drifted timber had collected in great rafts that effectively blocked passage. Occasional elevations or prairies (*e.g.* Grand Prairie, one hundred miles in length) furnished the only opportunity for settlement, and these were quickly found and utilized. When Nuttall descended the Mississippi in 1819, he found the French villages dwindling. Big and Little Prairie had been destroyed by the earthquake of 1811 [1] and by subsequent inundations, and the region was still subject to an occasional shock by no means reassuring to

the soul of the pioneer. The *habitants* were "here, as elsewhere, in miserable circumstances," [2] and raised "no wheat, and scarcely enough of maize for their support." They still dressed in the half-Indian costume of the *voyageur*, — "blanket *capeaus*, buckskin pantaloons, and moccasins," with no head covering but a handkerchief, for men and women alike. For the isolated squatter, the hunt was still an important supplement to farming, and these "hunting farmers" brought their beaver skins to Nuttall's bateau "anxious to barter them for whiskey, though scarcely possessed either of bread or vegetables." New Madrid was an insignificant hamlet,[3] made up of some twenty log houses and two or three stores miserably supplied with goods that sold at exorbitant prices. Arkansas Post, built on a bluff beyond the reach of inundations, was still a considerable town, boasting from thirty to forty houses and three mercantile establishments. The proprietors brought groceries and textiles from New Orleans and hardware from Pittsburgh, and they were accustomed to carry their stock in trade up the Arkansas as far as Fort Smith.[4] The farmers in the neighborhood of the Post were largely French and were growing good crops of corn and cotton. The rich alluvial soil produced from one thousand to fifteen hundred pounds of cotton to the acre and, since this sold at $5 to $6 per hundredweight in the seed, the crop was a paying one. Of slaves there were few in this primitive community, but white labor was to be had at from $12 to $15 per month with board. Settlement was retarded by uncertainty as to land

titles, occasioned by the Spanish grants that had not yet been confirmed or annulled by the United States government. The Winters of Natchez claimed a tract of one million acres in the immediate vicinity of the Post, two Spanish *commandantes* had received grants of indefinite extent on White River, while Baron Bastrop's fifty thousand acres on the Washita were claimed by his heirs.[5]

On the prairies back from the river were some French-speaking squatters, half-breeds or *metifs*, said to be descended from the ten men whom Tonti had left at the Post in 1686. They had degenerated to the savage state and were "entirely hunters, Indians in habit, and paid no attention to the cultivation of the soil." The American settlers farther up the stream were for the most part from Kentucky and Tennessee. They were growing corn and cotton with success, but hesitated to make any permanent improvements because of their uncertain tenure. Cotton-gins, sawmills, and grist-mills were projected, but little had as yet been accomplished. At Little Rock, the entrance to the hill country, a Georgian named Hogan had laid out a town and proposed to utilize the water-power. At the mouth of the Cadron another town was projected, and the one occupant of a town lot cherished great hopes of the future; but to Nuttall's unbiased judgment there seemed no reason for any accession of population or business. The last white settlement on the Arkansas was at Pecannerie (so named for the pecan trees that grew in the surrounding forests). Here some sixty families had found fertile lands and a whole-

some climate, but the men were renegades and fugitives from justice, an ignorant and lawless lot. They were too far from the market to sell cotton at a paying price ($3 per hundredweight in seed) and their agriculture was confined to corn and potatoes for their own food.

Nuttall thought the agricultural possibilities of Arkansas unequalled if once the swamps were drained and the rivers cleared of obstructions. Cotton, corn, rice, indigo, tobacco, and hemp bore abundantly, while subtropic fruits, peaches, plums and grapes flourished in the open, and well-laden orchards were seen even about the Indian villages. Cattle were allowed to run at large, since they required no shelter and were driven in only for an occasional counting and salting. They subsisted through the mild winters on the natural fodder furnished by the canebrakes and shave rush (*equisetum hiemale*). No attention was paid to breed, not even of horses. These, too, ran wild and, though they deteriorated in size, grew stocky and vigorous after the hardy Spanish type. They brought from $50 to $100 apiece in the local market. South of Fort Smith in the valley of the "Pottoe" (Poteau) River was a wonderful pasture-land. "The whole country was a prairie, full of luxuriant grass," [6] and this natural pasturage extended "even to the summits of the hills, offering an almost inexhaustible range to cattle." [7] Here were feeding throngs of wild horses, herds of deer, and even an occasional buffalo.

On the lower river, government surveyors were already at work, plotting the lands of first and

second grade, and these were soon to be sold at auction at the minimum rate of $2 per acre. Speculators were also on the ground with land scrip representing the preëmption rights of veterans of the recent war, which they had bought at from $3 to $10 per acre, assuming the payment to the land office and expecting to recoup themselves out of sales to prospective emigrants. All of the land was fertile, but much of it lay so low as to be unfit for human habitation, and the advertisements printed in the eastern papers were usually misleading. Martin Chuzzlewit's "Eden" is a fair example of the frauds perpetrated on the ignorant investor. Wherever there was sufficient altitude to provide drainage, however, the climate was salubrious, and the settlements flourished. A town in this region with a fortunate location was like Jonah's gourd, the growth of a night.

White River, in its upper reaches, flowed through flinty hills, and although the narrow bottoms were fertile and capable of producing excellent crops of corn, wheat, and cotton, the river was not navigable except for canoes and there was no inducement to raise crops that could not be got to market. Here conditions were primitive indeed. Schoolcraft, the geologist, who visited the region in 1819, describes the people. "The only inhabitants on the upper parts of White River, so far as inhabitants have penetrated, are hunters, who live in camps and log-cabins, and support themselves by hunting the bear, deer, buffalo, elk, beaver, raccoon, and other animals who are found in great plenty in that region.

They also raise some corn for bread, and for feeding their horses, on preparing for long journeys into the woods, or other extraordinary occasions. They seldom, however, cultivate more than an acre or two, subsisting chiefly on animal food and wild honey, and pay no attention to the cultivation of garden vegetables, if I except some cabbages, noticed at a few habitations. When the season of hunting arrives, the ordinary labors of a man about the house and cornfield devolve upon the women, whose condition in such a state of society may readily be imagined. They in fact pursue a similar course of life with the savages; having embraced their love of ease, and their contempt for agricultural pursuits, with their sagacity in the chase, their mode of dressing in skins, their manners, and their hospitality to strangers.

"The furs and peltries which are collected during repeated excursions in the woods, are taken down the river at certain seasons in canoes, and disposed of to traders who visit the lower parts of this river for that purpose. Here they receive in exchange for their furs woolen cloths, rifles, knives and hatchets, salt, powder, lead, iron for horse shoes, blankets, iron pots, shoes, and other articles of primary importance in their way of life. Those living near the cultivated parts of Lawrence County, in Arkansas Territory, also bring down in exchange for such articles, buffaloe beef, pork, bears' meat, bees' wax, and honey; which are again sold by the traders along the banks of the Mississippi, or at New Orleans. Very little cash is paid, and that in hard money only, no bank bills of

any kind being taken in that quarter. I happened to be present, on my return from the head waters of White River, at one of these exchanges, where a further opportunity was offered of observing the manners and character of these *savage Europeans*. Bears' meat was sold at $10 per cwt.; buffaloe beef at $4; cows' beef at $3; pork, in the hog, at $3.50; venison hams at 25 cents each; wild turkies the same; wild honey at $1 per gallon; beaver fur $2 per lb.; bears' skins $1.50 each; otter's skins $2 a piece; raccoon 25 cents each; deers' skins 25 cents per lb. These prices were considered high by the purchaser, but they were only nominally so, for he paid them off in articles at the most exorbitant rates. Common three-point or Mackinaw blankets were sold at $8 each; butcher knives at $2; rifle locks at $8; common coarse blue cloth at $6 per yard; coffee at 75 cents per lb.; salt at $5 per bushel; lead at 25 cents per lb.; gunpowder at $2 per lb.; axes at $6 each; horse shoe nails at $3 per set, &c. The trade of this river is consequently attended with profits which amply repay for the risks and fatigues incident to a voyage in that quarter. Vast quantities of furs and skins are annually brought down this river, with some bees' wax, honey, beef, bacon, &c." [8]

The United States government had chosen the upper Arkansas valley for an Indian reservation, and was removing hither the tribes whose lands were coveted by the whites. The Quapaws had sold sixty thousand square miles in the lower valley for $4000 down and an annuity of $1000. The bargain had proved a good one for the government, for these same

lands were now being sold at $10 an acre. The Cherokees, transplanted from Georgia, were cultivating the soil and building houses that compared well with those of the white settlers, although the government had not yet established their titles. The Osages, freshly removed from their villages north of the Arkansas, were less promising. Long intercourse with the trader had brought to nought their native industries, and had taught them nothing better. Drunken and profligate, and cherishing a sense of grievance, the young braves revenged themselves on the trappers who fell into their power, stealing their horses and stripping and torturing the defenceless men. Bad blood was brewing between the Indians and the squatters who were forced to vacate and make way for these mischievous wards of Uncle Sam. It was already becoming apparent that the Indians could not subsist without the buffalo herds, which had furnished them with food, clothing, and shelter from time immemorial. As the white man advanced up the water-courses, the herds retreated before his deadly firearms. Experienced hunters estimated that this withdrawal was proceeding at the rate of ten miles a year. The annual slaughter was estimated at two hundred thousand, of which total not more than five thousand were killed by the whites. The diminished herds took refuge in the "parks" at the head waters of the Arkansas and Platte and crossed the many passes of the Rocky and Wasatch ranges to the bunch grass "benches" on their western slopes.

Arkansas was the veritable frontier. Some fifteen hundred hunters and trappers, unaccustomed to re-

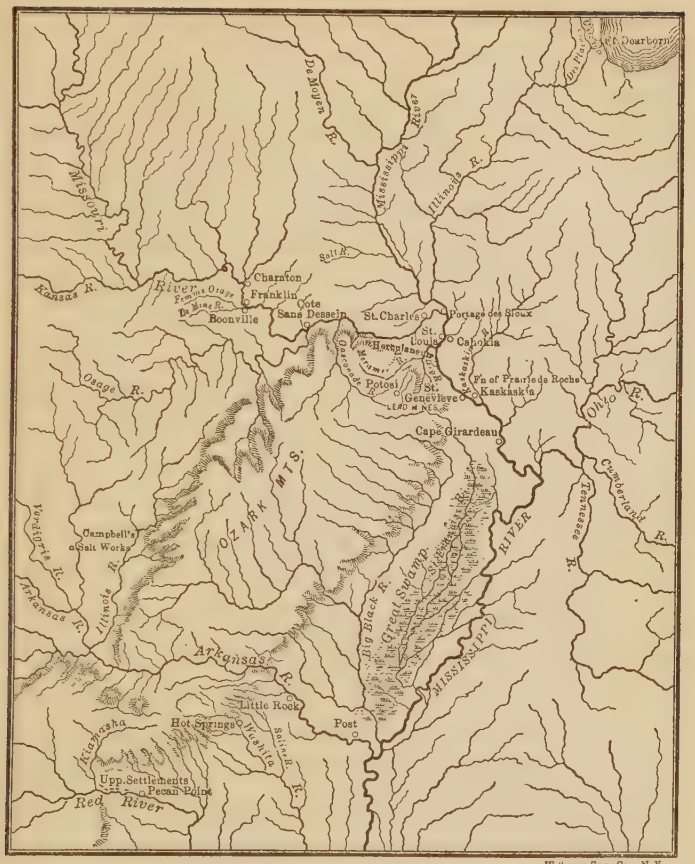
straint, degenerate in habits and morals, supported a miserable existence in the back country, while the town population was largely composed of renegades and fugitives from justice who sought escape from civil authority. The territory of Arkansas was organized in 1821, and a governor was sent out from Washington who inaugurated his administration at Arkansas Post with considerable pomp; but the laws against gambling, etc., enacted by the infant legislature, were broken by the officials themselves with small regard for decency, and the "rough and untamed" people pursued their licentious practices unchecked.

The Missouri River Settlements

The valley of the Missouri was better drained than that of the Arkansas, and the climate was more bracing, while soil and rainfall were no less auspicious. When Lewis and Clark went up the river in 1804, they noted the fields of corn and wheat belonging to the *habitants* of Portage des Sioux showing fair in the rich bottom lands of the north bank. The village of St. Charles, or Petite Côte, as the people preferred to call it, contained about one hundred houses, "the most of them small and indifferent," and four hundred people, chiefly Canadian French with an occasional dash of Indian blood. "A great majority of the inhabitants are miserably pour illiterate and when at home excessively lazy, tho' they are polite hospitable and by no means deficient in point of natural genious. . . . A small garden of vegetables is the usual extent of their cultivation, and this is commonly imposed on the old-men and boys; the

men in the vigor of life consider the cultivation of the earth a degrading occupation, and in order to gain the necessary subsistence for themselves and families, either undertake hunting voyages on their own account, or engage themselves as hirelings"[9] to men with sufficient capital to fit out more ambitious expeditions. On Femme Osage (Boone's Lick), where many people came down to the river's bank to watch the passing of the explorers, there were thirty or forty American families. The first settler was Daniel Boone, the pioneer of the trans-Alleghany migration, who, having lost his lands in Kentucky by some lawyer's trick, had moved on to this new frontier and secured a Spanish grant (1798).

When the Astorians ascended the river six years later, the *ultima thule* of civilization was sixty miles above St. Charles on Boone's Lick. Boone had just returned from the spring hunt with sixty beaver skins, and he overlooked the launching of Hunt's bateaux with a professional eye. Bradbury's description is graphic. "The old man was still erect in form, strong in limb and unflinching in spirit; and as he stood on the river-bank, watching the departure of an expedition destined to traverse the wilderness to the very shores of the Pacific, very probably felt a throb of his old pioneer spirit, impelling him to shoulder his rifle and join the adventurous band."[10] Brackenridge, who was of Lisa's party, noted with surprise that there were "tolerable plantations" in the bottom lands as far as Point Labadie. "These usually consist of a few acres cleared, on the borders of the river, with a small log hut or cabin, and stables



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SETTLEMENTS IN UPPER LOUISIANA, 1820.

for horses, etc. They raise a little Indian corn, pumpions, potatoes, and a few vegetables. But they have abundance of hogs and horned cattle." [11] On Le Mine River were valuable salt-works under the management of Braxton Cooper of Culpepper, Virginia. "The settlement is but one year old, but is already considerable, and increasing rapidly; it con-

sists of seventy-five families, the greater part living on the bank of the river, in the space of four or five miles. They are generally persons in good circumstances, most of them have slaves. Mr. Cooper informed me that the upland, back, is the most beautiful he ever beheld. He thinks that from the mouth of the Missouri to this place, the country for at least forty miles from the river, may bear the character of rich woodland; the prairies forming but trifling proportions." [12]

The *Journal* of the Long expedition (1821) gives evidence of considerable accessions to the population of Missouri in the eleven years interval. The pioneers were mostly emigrants from Tennessee, well-to-do farmers, who took up land in the river bottoms and worked them by slave labor. The settlements were prosperous, although somewhat retarded by the uncertainty of land titles and the preëmption of the most desirable locations by speculators. Côte Sans Dessein, opposite the mouth of the Osage, boasted thirty families and as many small log cabins, but though the soil was extraordinarily fertile, improvements were discouraged by the fact that the tract was claimed by Chouteau on the basis of a Spanish grant. Just above the Osage on the south bank of the Missouri, the land had been "located" for a town, and lots were being sold in St. Louis at prices varying from $50 to $180 each. Above Little Manito Rocks (Boone County), were several mushroom towns with no more than half-a-dozen houses apiece,—Nashville, Rectorsville, Smithton, etc., each named after the fond

projector who cherished great hopes of the future. "Almost every settler, who has established himself on the Missouri, is confidently expecting that his farm is, in a few years, to become the seat of wealth and business, and the mart for an extensive district." [13] Franklin, a two-year-old village across the river from Booneville, was confident of becoming a metropolis. Here uncleared land was selling at from $2 to $10 and $15 an acre, corn brought twenty-five cents a bushel, wheat $1, and bacon twelve and a half cents a pound, while labor cost seventy-five cents a day. The fecundity of the soil was unparalleled, and tillage proved comparatively inexpensive. A slave could cultivate twenty acres of corn and produce sixty bushels per acre in a season, whereas in Kentucky the same amount of labor was expended on fifteen acres with a smaller acreage return, so that the profits of farming were reckoned to be one-third less than in Missouri. Chariton, a village of fifty houses and five hundred people, was the last white settlement, and the inhabitants lined the bank to see the *Western Engineer*, the first steamboat that had ever ascended the Missouri. Beyond, the only sign of white occupation was an occasional trapper's lodge, where some worn-out mountain man had undertaken to till the soil and had painfully "made his first crop." One such man was planning to take his family up the Platte River.

The pioneers of the westward migration in Missouri, as in Arkansas, were mere "squatters,"—worn-out trappers fain to eke out existence for themselves and their half-breed families by desultory farming,

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luckless traders so long accustomed to intercourse with the Indians that the ways of civilization were irksome to them, refugees and renegades who sought exemption from restraint in the region Flint called "the land beyond the Sabbath." Such a man did not buy land, but put up a temporary shelter in a location where wood, water, and pasturage were abundant and where the hunting was still good. Since his only wealth was in horses, cattle, and swine, he lost nothing by change of habitat. "When the canes are fed down and destroyed, and the acorns become scarce, the small corn-field and the rude cabin are abandoned, and the *squatter* goes in search of a place where all the original wealth of the forest is yet undiminished. Here he again builds his hut, removes the trees from a few acres of land, which supplies its annual crop of corn, while the neighboring woods, for an extent of several miles, are used both as pasture and hunting grounds." [14] James, the chronicler of the Long expedition, quotes Boone as saying that it was high time to move when a man could no longer fell a tree for firewood within a few yards of his cabin door.

The bulk of the pioneers came of Southern stock, often from Virginia or the Carolinas direct, but more frequently from Tennessee, Kentucky or the Gulf states, or from the lower counties of the commonwealths beyond the Ohio where the infusion of Southern blood was strong; and everywhere the Scotch-Irish element led the van. Vigorous, self-assertive, resourceful, the Appalachian mountaineers revelled in the vicissitudes and perils of the wilderness, and

were more at home in a prairie schooner than in a comfortable but stationary dwelling. The westward movement was impelled not so much by necessity as by the love of adventure and the belief that somewhere beyond civilization lay the opportunity for speedy wealth. The direction of migration was determined by successive crazes,—*e.g.* for Boone's Lick, for Salt River (Iowa), for the Mauvaises Terres on the Illinois, for Colonel Austin's colony on the Brazos.

After the peace of Ghent had guaranteed the tranquillity of the frontier, came the permanent settlers bringing wives and children from "back east," together with agricultural implements, domestic utensils, and slaves. They came in flatboats down the Ohio or the Cumberland or the Tennessee to the great river that swept them on to Missouri, Arkansas, and Louisiana. Schoolcraft, on his voyage from Cairo to St. Louis, passed a score or more of "boats of all denominations, laden with merchandize, and emigrant passengers, chiefly destined for Boon's Lick on the Missouri,"[15] then reputed to be one of the richest bodies of land west of the Alleghanies. These emigrants were largely from the Northern states,—Maine, Vermont, Connecticut, western New York and Pennsylvania, with a few Kentucky families of the better type, and their principal settlement, Franklin, was a center of light and learning, as well as of commerce.

On the Whitewater, back of Cape Girardeau, was a colony of German Lutherans, most of whom had come first to Pennsylvania or North Carolina and later moved on to Missouri in search of better land.

Flint describes them as honest and industrious, with a passion for stone houses and barns, good orchards and permanent improvements. Their horses and cattle were of a superior breed and their fields well cultivated. Their women were quiet, patient and hard-working, and devoted themselves to the housewifely arts of the Old World with pathetic persistence. They formed a marked contrast to their French neighbors, "who were crowded into villages with mud hovels, fond of conversation and coffee," but rarely putting forth industrial energy sufficient to raise them above indigence. The Germans were a large, stout, ruddy race, whereas the Frenchmen were "spare, thin, sallow and tanned, with their flesh adhering to their bones, and apparently dried to the consistency of parchment." [16] The German and the French settlers were alike at least in this — they clung to their native language and the forms of their inherited worship with stubborn persistence.

Timothy Flint resided at St. Charles for the years 1816–1818 and he describes the inrush of people. "The immigration from the western and southern states to this country poured in a flood, the power and strength of which could only be adequately conceived by persons on the spot. We have numbered a hundred persons passing through the village of St. Charles in one day. The number was said to have equalled that for many days together. From the Mamelles I have looked over the subjacent plain quite to the ferry, where the immigrants crossed the upper Mississippi. I have seen

in this extent nine wagons harnessed with from four to six horses. We may allow a hundred cattle, besides hogs, horses, and sheep, to each wagon; and from three or four to twenty slaves. The whole appearance of the train, the cattle with their hundred bells; the negroes with delight in their countenances, for their labors are suspended and their imaginations excited; the wagons, often carrying two or three tons, so loaded that the mistress and children are strolling carelessly along, in a gait which enables them to keep up with the slow travelling carriage; — the whole group occupies three quarters of a mile. The slaves generally seem fond of their masters, and quite as much delighted and interested in the immigration, as the master. It is to me a very pleasing and patriarchal scene. . . . Just about nightfall, they come to a spring or a branch, where there is water and wood. The pack of dogs sets up a cheerful barking. The cattle lie down and ruminate. The team is unharnessed. The huge waggons are covered, so that the roof completely excludes the rain. The cooking utensils are brought out. The blacks prepare a supper, which the toils of the day render delicious; and they talk over the adventures of the past day, and the prospects of the next. Meantime, they are going where there is nothing but buffaloes and deer to limit their range, even to the western sea." [17]

Prosperity was to be had on easy terms. "A Missouri planter, with a moderate force and a good plantation, can be as independent as it is fit that we should be. . . . One of my immediate neighbors, on

the prairie below St. Charles, had a hired white man, a negro, and two sons large enough to begin to help him. He had an hundred acres enclosed. He raised, the year that I came away, two thousand four hundred bushels of corn, eight hundred bushels of wheat, and other articles in proportion, and the number of cattle and hogs that he might raise was indefinite; for the pasturage and hay were as sufficient for a thousand cattle as for twenty. . . . Any person, able and disposed to labour, is forever freed from the apprehension of poverty. . . . A vigorous and active young man needs but two years of personal labour to have a farm ready for the support of a small family. . . . The soil is free from stones, loose and mellow, and needs no manure, and it is very abundant in the productions natural to it, the principal of which are corn, fruits, and wheat. The calculation is commonly made, that two days in a week contribute as much to support here, as the whole week at the North." [18] Missouri was free from the "fever and ague" that infested the heavily timbered lands in Illinois and along the Mississippi, and the immigrants passed by these fertile regions and pressed on to the wholesomer country beyond.

The enthusiasm of the colonist was whetted and directed by the zeal of the speculator. Of the methods by which these latter gentry succeeded in getting possession of the best locations we are told by one James Flint, a Scotchman, who came down the Ohio to St. Louis in an open boat in 1819, and saw many things by the way. The public lands in Missouri "are exposed by auction, in quarter sec-

tions of 160 acres each. A considerable part of them sold at from three to six dollars per acre. Lots, not sold at auction, may be subsequently bought at the land-office for two dollars per acre, on paying half a dollar in ready money and the remainder within five years. Land dealers are very vigilant in securing for themselves great quantities of the best land. It is not uncommon for reconnoitering parties of them to lodge in the woods for a whole week. By such means much of the best land, mill-seats and other local advantages, are withdrawn from the market at the first public sales. . . . The most advantageous purchases are considered to be those on the edges of prairies, with a part of the open land, and a part of the woods."[19]

The farmers of Missouri, as in other pioneer communities, were heavily indebted to the older and wealthier states east of the Alleghanies for the capital with which to purchase and improve their lands. The crisis of 1819 and the consequent curtailment of credit was an unprecedented calamity. The local banks, which had been doing business on the wildcat plan, failed one and all, and their notes were valueless. There was no specie in the country, and the most thriving towns were suddenly reduced to barter. The newly organized state legislature resorted to a desperate expedient. An issue of $2,000,000 in certificates of indebtedness was authorized, and this state currency was declared receivable for taxes and all obligations to the treasury including royalties from the salt works. The certificates were none the less in contravention of the

Constitution of the United States and were declared invalid by the courts. Settlers who had taken up government land on the credit system were in dire straits, for no matter how productive their farms, they could get no money with which to pay the installments as they fell due. Congress came to their relief by extending the time of payment and by cancelling such portion of the obligation as might be deducted on account of lands surrendered. In marked exception to the general bankruptcy, showed the German settlements; these sturdy immigrants had refused to touch the bank money and insisted on receiving all payments in specie.

The environment of the pioneer farmer is described by Edward Flagg, a Cincinnati journalist of New England antecedents who visited Illinois and Missouri in 1836. "There are few objects to be met with in the backwoods of the West more unique and picturesque than the dwelling of the emigrant. After selecting an elevated spot as a site for building, a cabin or log house — which is somewhat of an improvement upon the first — is erected in the following manner. A sufficient number of straight trees, of a size convenient for removing, are felled, slightly hewn upon the opposite sides, and the extremities notched or mortised with the axe. They are then piled upon each other so that the extremities lock together; and a single or double edifice is constructed, agreeable to the taste or ability of the builder. Ordinarily the cabin consists of two quadrangular apartments, separated by a broad area between, connected by a common floor, and covered

by a common roof, presenting a parallelogram triple the length of its width. The better of these apartments is usually appropriated to the entertainment of the casual guest, and is furnished with several beds and some articles of rude furniture to correspond. The open area constitutes the ordinary sitting and eating apartment of the family in fine weather; and, from its coolness, affords a delightful retreat. The intervals between the logs are stuffed with fragments of wood or stone, and plastered with mud or mortar, and the chimney is constructed much in the same manner. The roof is covered with thin clapboards of oak or ash, and, in lieu of nails, transverse pieces of timber retain them in their places. Thousands of cabins are thus constructed, without a particle of iron or even a common plank. The rough clapboards give to the roof almost the shaggy aspect of thatch at a little distance, but they render it impermeable to even the heaviest and most protracted rain-storms. A rude gallery often extends along one or both sides of the building, adding much to its coolness in summer and to its warmth in winter by the protection afforded from sun and snow. The floor is constructed of short, thick planks, technically termed 'puncheons,' which are confined by wooden pins; and, though hardly smooth enough for a ball-room, yet well answer every purpose for a dwelling, and effectually resist moisture and cold. The apertures are usually cut with a view to free ventilation, and the chimneys stand at the extremities outside the walls of the cabin. A few pounds of nails, a few boxes of glass,

a few hundred feet of lumber, and a few days assistance of a house carpenter, would, of course, contribute not a little to the comfort of the *shieling;* but neither of these are indispensable." [20] "The furniture of the apartment consisted of two plank-erections designed for bedsteads, which, with a tall clothes-press, divers rude boxes, and a side-saddle, occupied a better moiety of the area; while a rough table, a shelf against the wall, upon which stood a water-pail, a gourd, and a few broken trenchers, completed the house-hold paraphernalia of this most unique of habitations. A half-consumed flitch of bacon suspended in the chimney, and a huge iron pot upon the fire, from which issued a savory indication of the seething mess within, completes the 'still-life' of the picture." [21] "In rear of the premises rise the out-buildings; stables, corn-crib, meat-house, etc., all of them quite as perfect in structure as the dwelling itself, and quite as comfortable for residence. If to all this we add a well, walled up with a section of a hollow cotton-wood, a cellar or cave in the earth for pantry, a zigzag rail fence enclosing the whole clearing, a dozen acres of Indian corn bristling up beyond, a small garden and orchard, and a host of swine, cattle, and naked children about the door, and the *toute ensemble* of a back-woods farmhouse is complete. . . . The present mode of cultivation sweeps off vast quantities of timber; but it must soon be superseded. Houses of brick and stone will take the place of log-cabins; hedge-rows will supply that of rail enclosures, while coal for fuel will be a substitute for wood." [20]

Missouri offered great attractions to the pioneer farmer. The land in the river-bottoms, where the rich black loam had accumulated to a depth of thirty feet, was of phenomenal fertility, while the ridges of flint and limestone that divided the river courses in the southern portion afforded excellent pasture. Here were thousands of acres of the rank native herbage to which the oak trees, grown hoary in the course of centuries, gave a parklike beauty. There was little of the malaria-infested swamp-land that was the bane of settlers on the lower Mississippi. The climate was dry and wholesome and the temperature quite uniform, avoiding the severe winters of New England and the hot summers of Louisiana. All the cereals, corn, wheat, rye, and oats, were successfully grown. Corn was especially prolific, running up to a height of twenty feet and bearing ninety bushels to the acre. Flax, hemp, and tobacco did well in the rich bottom lands where the nitrogenous elements of the soil were renewed by yearly floods. A farmer's family was self-sustaining so far as bread and meat, fruit and vegetables were concerned, and might even make shift to provide sufficient clothing. Cotton was grown in the southern districts "for family use, not for market," and a coarse cotton cloth was woven by the women of the household. If the settlement was near a navigable river, the surplus stock of grain, salt meat, and live stock might be got to market, but the demand for farm products was limited. Only the few flatboats that reached New Orleans early in the season could command paying prices and

later cargoes were often sold at loss. As cultivation extended, prices of food-stuffs fell below the cost of production, and the sale of the grain boats barely covered the expenses of the voyage. The farmers were therefore obliged to live off their own and abjure imported goods. Tea, coffee, and foreign sugar were high-priced luxuries, indulged in sparingly by all but the few who had money to spend. Manufactures were developing, however, with the increase in local demand. Flour-mills and distilleries, sawmills and tan-yards, were among the first, but carding machines, fulling and cloth mills soon followed. These last were on Big River and were run by water-power.[22]

The very abundance of the natural resources of the country proved a detriment. Soil, timber, and mineral wealth were exploited as if the supply was limitless. Waste of timber had some justification among the pioneers east of the Mississippi where trees stood in the way of cultivation and shut out the air and sunlight on which health depended; but here on the margin of a treeless region, needless destruction of the forest growth was manifestly disastrous. Nevertheless, the pines and oaks were remorselessly felled, and every settlement showed what Flint called a "Kentucky outline of dead trees, and huge logs lying on all sides in the fields." [23] Underbrush was fired with wanton carelessness, and thousands of acres of pasture went up in smoke. A light wind served to carry the conflagration to a great distance, and often travellers over the tenantless plains were overtaken by the flames and destroyed.

The mineral deposits were treated with the same careless disregard of the future. In 1780, one of the hunters (named Burton or Breton), left at Ste. Genevieve by Renault, literally stumbled upon a surface deposit of lead and, recognizing its value, gave notice of his find to the authorities. During the Spanish régime, a little ore was brought to Ste. Genevieve and smelted in an open log furnace, but by this crude process hardly fifty per cent of the metal was extracted. This was sent down the river in pig, and no manufactures were attempted. In 1797, Moses Austin, a Connecticut Yankee who had had some experience of lead mining on New River, in Virginia, brought his family and his slaves to this region and, having secured a league-square land grant from Carondelet, began operations at Mine à Burton. He introduced scientific methods of smelting, erected a reverberatory furnace and a shot tower, and shipped shot and sheet lead to New Orleans and Havana. Other American settlers discovered Mine à Robin, Mine à Martin, etc., and it soon became evident that a very important mineral region, three thousand square miles in extent, lay in the hills between the sources of the Big and St. Francis rivers. Silver and zinc were mingled with the lead. Iron Mountain, a ridge from five to six hundred feet high, was largely composed of iron of excellent quality, while Chartier and Cedar Creek furnished water-power adequate to "drive any number of forges." Black manganese, alum, and saltpetre were also abundant, and only capital was needed to develop industries of the first order.

The new arrivals regarded the mineral resources of the territory as free to all American citizens. Miners worked on their own account or in little companies and were content to raise the surface deposits with pickaxe and shovel, never using anything more elaborate than a bucket and windlass. When at a depth of ten or fifteen feet a bed of limestone was encountered, the diggings were abandoned and a new bed was sought for, until the whole region was torn up with prospectors' holes. Schoolcraft, the geologist, who made a study of the region in 1819, protested against this extravagance. "Much time is thus consumed, in hunting new beds of ore, which if spent in labour upon the old ones, would be found infinitely more advantageous. Thus a kind of laziness is created; — they who spend the most time in hunting for ore, spend the least in digging it." [24] Austin had condemned this wasteful practice quite as strongly in a report submitted to the government in 1816. He himself had sunk a shaft eighty feet deep and found rich deposits below the rock ledge. It was evident that the reckless drift-mining menaced the future of the industry, but there were few men in the field who had capital or ability to work a force of slaves under scientific direction. The ordinary miner sold the ore he raised to the proprietor of a furnace for $2 per hundredweight and realized on an average $2 a day, — no more than the wage of a skilled mechanic in the neighborhood. The rock, cleaned of spar, was smelted in an open-hearth furnace which was fired by logs and kept at a steady and increasing heat for twenty-four hours,

when the lead was run off. Much of the metal remained in the ashes, perhaps fifty per cent,[25] but the process was inexpensive. The open hearth was built of loose stones, cost but $50 to $60, and required only three men to run it — one to fetch wood and two to guard the fire in alternate watches — whereas the ash furnace cost $100 and necessitated more skill. The pigs were carted to Ste. Genevieve or Herculaneum and sold to merchants, who shipped the metal down the river or converted it into shot for sale to the fur companies of St. Louis.

The first shot-tower was put up by Jean Maklot in 1809, the second by Moses Austin the year following. Schoolcraft describes the process used. "A considerable proportion of the lead made in this [Missouri] Territory is manufactured into shot. There are 3 shot towers in the vicinity of Herculaneum, where shot is made by letting it fall down the banks of the Mississippi. The banks at this place consist of limestone, which forms a perpendicular bluff of about 100 feet immediately at the water's edge, both above and below the town. On this bluff a small wooden tower is erected, with a furnace and kettles for preparing, smelting, and casting the lead, and having a projection in front, from which the lead is dropped into a receptacle with water below, where there is another building and apparatus for glazing and polishing. The lead, previous to being dropped, is prepared by mixing with it a small quantity of arsenic, which renders it more fluid in casting, and increases its hardness when cold. It is melted in an iron pot in the upper part

of the tower, and poured into a copper sieve, made by perforating a copper pan full of holes, of the size of the shot, through which the globules of fluid lead drop into the cistern below. By the time they reach the water they have become sufficiently cool to preserve their globular shapes. Shot of the largest size require to be dropped from the greatest height, say 140 feet, while the small sizes are only suffered to fall about 90 feet. One man will smelt and cast, after the lead is prepared by alloying it with arsenic, from 4 to 5000 lbs. per day. To polish these will occupy him nine days. The polishing is done by putting a quantity of shot into a hollow cylindrical wooden vessel or barrel, which is fixed on a shaft and turned by a crank. The action of the shot against each other, converts them into perfect spheres, and a little plumbago which is added gives them a gloss, in which state they are ready for market.

"An improvement has lately been made here by Mr. Elias Bates, which facilitates the casting of shot, and supersedes the necessity of using a sieve. He has a ladle of cast iron, in the shape of a parallelogram, but smaller at the bottom than the top. The two longest, being opposite sides of this ladle, are perforated with holes near, and at an equal distance from, the top, so that by canting the ladle a little either way, the shot drop through, and as the ladle is smallest at the bottom, are not at all impeded on their way to the cistern below. The quantity of shot made here for 18 months, ending 1st June, 1817, was 668,350 lbs. The present

price of shot is $7.50 per cwt. The business, I am told, has been very profitable." [26]

Austin estimated the yield from the Mine à Burton from 1798 to 1804, at 360,000 pounds per annum; from 1804 to 1808, at 800,000 pounds, and from that date to 1816, the year of his report to the government, at 500,000. The total production since his coming to the country he estimated at approximately 9,360,000 pounds. Schoolcraft estimated the output of 1819 for the whole region at 4,971,000 pounds and thought the gross product since the acquisition of Louisiana might be put at 55,000,000, a sum total which at four cents a pound must have brought in $3,000,000,—one-fifth of the purchase price. The number of men employed—miners, teamsters, blacksmiths, woodcutters—was approximately 1130 in 1819, and in the four years of maximum production the number had been considerably larger. There were forty-five lead mines and thirty-four furnaces, while the shot towers crowned every point of vantage on the bluffs of Herculaneum. Lead mining was an industry that rivalled the fur trade in industrial importance, if not in dramatic interest.

Even more essential to the prosperity of the frontier, though representing less capital and smaller revenue, were the numerous salt-works. Salines were more frequent and extensive west of the Mississippi because of the lighter rainfall and greater proportion of sunshine inducing evaporation. The brine, whether found in swamps, lakes, or springs, was reduced by boiling in open kettles,

and there was no attempt at refining. Fifty or sixty gallons of brine were sufficient to produce one bushel of salt which sold in the neighborhood at $1 per bushel. On the Saline Fork of Le Mine River, were salt-works where Braxton Cooper was getting out one hundred bushels a week, and on Camp Fork, a Mr. Lockhart was manufacturing five hundred bushels. The Saline Creek that emptied into the Mississippi just below Ste. Genevieve furnished the people of that district with this necessity of life; the deposits on Salt River, one hundred miles north of St. Louis, were extensively worked, while the rich salines on Des Moines River were attracting attention. A law of 1807 reserved from sale such public lands as were supposed to contain salt or minerals, and provided for a system of three-year leases and the payment of a royalty to the government. Apparently this was intended not so much to secure revenue as to conserve the natural resources of the country, but the difficulty of enforcing the law was so great that the restriction was largely inoperative.

Whatever the pioneer industry, whether the output was salt, lead, furs, flour, cotton, or tobacco, cheap transportation was essential to success. The country offered few obstacles to road-building, but the public authorities had small revenue with which to finance such enterprises, and the need did not seem pressing. Prairie schooners might be driven over the highest ridges, and emigrant parties followed the beaten track or deviated from it at their convenience. There were two great roads leading

to the Red River settlements and beyond, worn wide and plain by droves of cattle and horses, emigrant carts and freight wagons; but the costs of land carriage were prohibitive for agricultural produce, and the country west of the Mississippi was dependent, as still older communities were, on water transportation. The all-important avenues of trade and travel were the rivers — not only the Mississippi and the Missouri, but lesser streams such as the St. Francis, the Maramee, the Gasconnade, and the Osage — by which flatboat, raft, or dugout canoe might make its way to a market town or down the Mississippi to Natchez and New Orleans.[27] The people of Ste. Genevieve were eagerly anticipating the opening of a water route by way of the Illinois River and Lake Michigan with Detroit and Buffalo, and thence *via* the new Erie Canal with Utica and New York. The scheme seemed entirely practicable to Schoolcraft. "The river *Plein*, the main head fork of Illinois, approaches so near the head of Chicago River, which enters Lake Michigan at Fort Dearborn, that a communication exists in high water. I conversed with a trader last summer at St. Louis, who had come through in the spring, and afterward saw his boat lying at the wharf. It carried from 4 to 6 tons, and was built *skiff-fashion*, with a flat bottom. He represented the undertaking as easy of execution, not requiring an artificial cut of more than 2 miles, and this through an alluvial soil." [28]

The Mississippi was the great highway on which all traffic converged, and craft of every description,

from the rough home-made scows and dugouts to the flatboats and keels that held tons of merchandise, thronged the river front at every port from St. Louis to New Orleans. Various improvements were being made in the primitive models. "It is now common to see flatboats worked by a bucket wheel, and a horse power, after the fashion of steamboat movement. Indeed, every spring brings forth new contrivances of this sort, the result of the farmer's meditations over his winter's fire." [29]

Flint describes this traffic at New Madrid: "In one place there are boats loaded with planks from the pine forests of the southwest of New York.[30] In another quarter there are the Yankee notions of Ohio; from Kentucky, pork, flour, whiskey, hemp, tobacco, bagging, and bale rope; from Tennessee there are the same articles, together with great quantities of cotton; from Missouri and Illinois, cattle and horses, the same articles generally as from Ohio, together with peltry and lead from Missouri. Some boats are loaded with corn in the ear and in bulk; others with barrels of apples and potatoes. Some have loads of cider, and what they call 'cider royal,' or cider that has been strengthened by boiling or freezing. There are dried fruits, every kind of spirits manufactured in these regions, and in short, the products of the ingenuity and agriculture of the whole upper country of the West. They have come from regions thousands of miles apart. They have floated to a common point of union. The surfaces of the boats cover some acres. Dunghill fowls are fluttering over the roofs, as an in-

variable appendage. The chanticleer raises his piercing note. The swine utter their cries. The cattle low. The horses trample, as in their stables. There are boats fitted on purpose, and loaded entirely with turkeys, that, having little else to do, gobble most furiously. The hands travel about from boat to boat, make inquiries, and acquaintances, and form alliances to yield mutual assistance to each other, on their descent from this to New Orleans. . . . The fleet unites once more at Natchez, or New Orleans, and, although they live on the same river, they may perhaps never meet each other again on the earth."[31] Some of these flatboats were fitted up as dram-shops, others as dry goods stores, and in others mechanics plied their respective trades. "While I was at New Madrid," continues Flint, "a large tinner's establishment floated there in a boat. In it all the different articles of tin-ware were manufactured and sold by wholesale and retail." Aboard another boat "were manufactured axes, scythes, and all other iron tools of this description, and in it horses were shod. . . . It was a complete blacksmith's shop." The settlers naturally clung to the rivers where wood and water were to be had in abundance and where alone cheap transportation were available for surplus products.

The movement of population into the Far West was greatly accelerated by the substitution of steam for oar and *cordelle* on the river boats. The first steamer destined for use on western waters (the *New Orleans*) was built at Pittsburgh in 1809 by Nicholas Roosevelt at a cost of $38,000. The

cautious New Yorker did not risk his vessel to the vagaries of river navigation until he had first gone the whole length of the Ohio and Mississippi in a keel-boat. The trial trip was made in 1809 with complete success, but the steamer was unluckily burned as she lay at anchor by the wharf in New Orleans. Other steamboats were soon built, however, at the ship yards of Pittsburgh, Wheeling, and Cincinnati. The first voyage up-stream was made by the *Enterprise* in 1815, the distance of one thousand miles between New Orleans and Louisville being covered in twenty-five days. A barge manned by twenty to thirty hands could make but ten miles a day up-stream, whereas a steamer easily accomplished one hundred. The superior speed and security of the new motor once assured, lines of packet boats were established, and all who could afford a cash fare abandoned the slower craft. Timothy Flint estimated (1818) that the steamers had thrown ten thousand flatboats and keel-boats out of employment. Schoolcraft gives a list of the fifty steamboats that were running on the Mississippi and its tributaries in 1819 with a registered tonnage of 7306. Steamboats were then building that would raise the total number to sixty-three, — "two . . . at Pittsburgh, one at Wheeling, one at Steubenville, one at Marietta, two at Cincinnati, one at Frankford, two at Shippingport, one at Madison, and two at New Albany." Each boat made on the average three trips a year to and from New Orleans, loaded with freight and passengers. Freight charges from Pittsburgh to New Orleans were one cent a pound,

from New Orleans to Pittsburgh, four cents. Passenger rates down-stream were $60, up-stream, $100. Each boat carried on an average ten passengers down-stream and five up. On this basis, Schoolcraft reckoned the total annual revenue for freight and passengers at $2,405,700.[32] Wharves of the Ohio and Mississippi river towns were still lined with keel boats and barges, however, and much of the produce was carried to market in flat-bottomed boats, "of a temporary construction, which were not calculated to ascend the stream and were generally sold for a trifle or abandoned." [33]

In 1824 Congress appropriated $105,000 for the improvement of navigation on the Mississippi, and Captain Henry M. Shreve was placed in charge of the work. Under his skilful management, the snags and drifting trees, the "sawyers" and "planters," [34] the sand bars and sunken rocks, that had long been the dread of pilots, were removed, and arrangements were made for the systematic survey of the channel so that the annual accretions might be weeded out year by year. The tributary rivers, the Missouri, Arkansas, and Red, were dealt with in turn. The removal of the Great Raft from Red River doubled the stretch of navigable water, and the grateful people named their westernmost settlement Shreveport. Flagg describes [35] the operations of a machine invented by Captain Shreve which extracted snags at an average cost of $12 to $15 each, and which the river men irreverently dubbed "Uncle Sam's Tooth-puller."

The navigation of the upper Mississippi was more

difficult and less remunerative. The up-stream pull from Cairo to St. Louis was a serious addition to the cost of a voyage, but it was soon warranted by trade. The arrival of the first steamboat, the *General Pike* (1817), was regarded by the people of St. Louis as the opening of an era of commercial greatness. The corn and flour, salt pork and beef, produced by the Missouri farmers began to be shipped down the Mississippi by reliable traders, and the planters of the lower river abandoned the production of their own supplies and concentrated their working force on their most remunerative crop. Moreover, the transportation of emigrants was soon a considerable business. The steamer on which Flagg went to St. Louis stopped at "a desolate-looking spot up on the Missouri shore" in order to deposit a party of settlers, "men, women, and little ones, with slaves, household stuff, pots, kettles, dogs, implements of husbandry, and all the paraphernalia of the backwood's farm." [36]

The risks of navigation on the Missouri were even greater than those offered by the Mississippi. The frequent floods, the rapid shiftings of the bed, the cavings of the bank and the sudden formation of sand bars frequently upset the calculations of the most experienced pilot, and it was the universal custom to tie up for the night. The swiftness of the current and the weight of the silt-laden water made necessary more powerful engines and a higher expenditure for fuel than were required for the Ohio and Mississippi boats. A plucky little tug, the *Independence*, made the trip to Franklin and Chariton in May, 1819, and Long's vessel, the *Western Engineer*, making three

Difficulties of Navigation on the Missouri.

St. Louis in 1855.

miles an hour, succeeded in reaching Council Bluffs in the following month; but the transports built at St. Louis for the Yellowstone Expedition could not stem the current. For many years thereafter the only steamers seen on the upper Missouri were sent out by the American Fur Company. Chouteau's boat, the *Yellowstone*, ascended the Missouri to its junction with the Milk in 1831, and for fifteen years thereafter, until 1846, an annual trip was made for the purpose of carrying men and supplies to the various posts. For the transportation of furs and buffalo hides downstream, however, the reliance was still on the Mackinaw boat which, loaded to the gunwales, made one hundred miles a day and required a crew of only five men. Between St. Louis and Westport Landing, on the other hand, traffic grew heavy with the increase in westward migration. Five regular steamers were employed on this route in 1831, from fifteen to twenty in 1836, and twenty-six in 1842.

"St. Louis is a kind of central point in this immense valley. From this point, outfits are constantly making to the military posts, and to the remotest regions by the hunters for furs. Boats are also constantly ascending to the lead-mine districts on the upper Mississippi." [37] Along the water front lay craft destined for the Mandan villages, for Prairie du Chien and the Falls of St. Anthony, for the voyage up the Illinois and through the navigable swamp that divided it from the Chicago River and Lake Michigan. Others were bound to the south, — to Arkansas Post, to Natchez, and New Orleans. An Indian trail, worn into a wagon road, connected St. Louis

with Little Rock and Natchitoches. Another, the Osage Trace, led southwest to the trading post on the Verdigris and along the Poteau River to the Kiamichi settlements. The population of St. Louis had increased slowly during the War of 1812, but thereafter it grew apace and mounted to four thousand in 1820 and to six thousand in 1830. The people were still largely foreign, and men were yet living who had felled the trees for the building of Laclede's fort. The leading merchants bore old French names, — Chouteau, Sarpy, Pratte, Menard, Sulard, — while Manuel Lisa was of Spanish origin. The French quarter lay to the south and was described by Flagg as "a right Rip Van Winkle-looking region, where each little steep-roofed cottage yet presents its broad piazza, and the cozey settee before the door beneath the tree shade, with the fleshy old burghers soberly luxuriating on an evening pipe, their dark-eyed, brunette daughters at their side." [38] Every house, whether the "steep-roofed stone cottage of the Frenchman or the tall stuccoed dwelling of the don," stood alone in the center of a garden which was often surrounded by a stout palisade, a necessary precaution against Indian forays. The "venerable mansions" of Auguste and Pierre Chouteau were surrounded by "lofty walls of masonry, with loop-holes and watch towers for defense." The residences of the well-to-do Americans, such as that of General William Ashley, stood on the high bluff overlooking the river, while the shops and warehouses were ranged along the water front at its foot, where two narrow streets running parallel with the river served as wharf and highway combined. The

preëminent commercial advantage of this site was a limestone ledge that extended for several miles above and below the town and formed a stable shore, much to be preferred to the muddy and caving banks characteristic of the Missouri and the lower Mississippi. Manufactures, too, were being undertaken where the produce of the farm might be converted into marketable form. In 1819 the place had one brewery, two distilleries, two water-mills, one steam flouring mill, and a grist-mill propelled by ox-power.

The population of Missouri in 1810 was but twenty thousand. By 1820, it had reached sixty-six thousand. The rapidly growing territory had great ambitions and a movement was organized to elevate the northern half (excluding Arkansas) to statehood. It was the first of the new commonwealths to be created west of the Mississippi, and the question of slavery, — settled for the Northwest, Southwest, and Mississippi territories by a series of congressional ordinances, — was raised anew. There were by this time ten thousand slaves in Missouri. Many of the plantations and mines were worked by slaves, and there were among them skilled artisans, blacksmiths and carpenters, whose services were extremely valuable to their masters and to the community. It was believed that the resources of the country could not be developed without slave labor. New England and the Northern states were keenly alive to the significance of the issue, and the question was bitterly debated in both houses of Congress. An attempt made by representatives of the Northern states to amend the motion for admission (introduced into the House of Representatives, Feb-

ruary, 1819) by the proviso that no more slaves be admitted and that all children thereafter born in the new state be set free at the age of twenty-five years, was defeated; but a compromise was reached in the enactment that slavery would henceforth be prohibited in Louisiana Territory north of the thirty-sixth parallel. The proclivity of emigrants from the slave-holding states for the rich bottom-lands of the Missouri and Arkansas rivers was thus confirmed. In the seaboard and Gulf states the number of slaves was increasing, and the productive power of the soil was declining. The younger and more enterprising planters were eager to recoup their fortunes in the new lands beyond the Mississippi.

Iowa

Meantime, the land of the Kiowas was attracting attention in the Northern states. The trend of American migration from east to west has always followed parallels of latitude. The denizens of the Atlantic states and of the commonwealths west of the Appalachians, seeking new homes, choose a climate to which they are accustomed and try to locate their farms where they can raise the crops with which they are familiar. In the estimation of men from New England, New York, and Ohio, the exclusion of slavery from the territory north of the thirty-sixth parallel gave additional value to this region. Emigration to the northwest was forwarded, moreover, by the opening up of the trans-Alleghany routes,—the Erie Canal, the Pennsylvania Canal and Portage Railway, the Baltimore and Ohio Canal, and the

National Post Road. Local enterprise was not slow to supplement these great highways and facilitate access to Iowa. There were ferries across the Mississippi at Dubuque, Buffalo, and Burlington, and a regular steamboat line was established (1825) which carried passengers up the river as far as Fort Snelling. In the early twenties there was a rush for the lead mines, and claims were taken up and profitably worked before the Indian titles were quieted or the land opened for settlement. The pioneers soon discovered that the fat, alluvial soils of the interior were even more productive than the mines, and squatters began cultivation before land offices were provided. To the frontier farmer, the toilsome task of breaking the sod was sufficient evidence of title, and he was outraged when the tract was sold at auction to some speculator from the East, who thus paid the government for the value of the improvements. Claims associations were organized for the purpose of adjudicating boundaries and titles among the actual farmers and for beating off alien bidders by combination, force, or fraud. Thus a rough justice was attained in defiance of law. Iowa Territory was organized in 1838 and statehood was granted in 1846.

The westward movement had been augmented by the hard times that prevailed in the eastern cities in 1833 and 1834. Workmen and operatives thrown out of employment by the curtailment of industry, turned to the unclaimed lands beyond the Mississippi as an opportunity not only to earn a livelihood but to attain the independence that was the dream of every American citizen. Canal boats, lake steamers,

and river steamers were crowded, while thousands of the more impecunious families made their way on foot or on horseback, in carts or prairie schooners, along post-road and trail, to the land of freedom and plenty. Allured by tales sent back by the pioneers or by the prospectuses distributed by speculators, they undertook the journey with the strong conviction that fortune lay before them, but with small comprehension of the risks and hardships of the new life.

The whole movement was speculative. The emigrants brought little with them but hope and energy and the American's capacity for adaptation. The land companies were engaged in a credit operation of ticklish proportions, expecting to make good their obligations out of the revenue from sales. The steamship companies, the merchants, wholesale and retail, the innkeepers along the routes, were all doing business on borrowed money, for there was limitless credit for any man who had a plausible scheme in his head. The "coon box" banks, organized after the termination of the second National Bank, were issuing money with small concern for redemption and were eager to loan on land security, even though that land was entirely undeveloped. The Specie Circular, requiring that payments at the United States land offices should be made in legal tender, suddenly pricked this overblown bubble of credit financiering, and a thousand prosperous enterprises collapsed in a night. Farmers were unable to sell their produce even at falling prices and so had no money with which to pay the installments of principal and interest;

land companies were ruined, for the mortgaged lands that came back into their possession had no commercial value; bankers closed their doors, and merchants, unable longer to get goods on credit from their eastern correspondents, were fain to do likewise. Hundreds of mushroom towns were abandoned, and the transportation projects that had seemed so feasible in the boom times before the panic, were involved in the general calamity.

Thomas H. Benton

The dominant figure in Missouri and an influential factor in the destiny of the Far West for the critical decades from 1820 to 1850 was Thomas H. Benton, the eloquent statesman who served during this period as representative of Missouri in the United States Senate. Benton was born in the "back country" of North Carolina, but his mother came of good Virginia stock and was a woman of sufficient intellectual capacity to direct her son's reading and to shield him from whiskey and cards, the demoralizing amusements of the frontier. In 1800, when the boy was but eight years old, this heroic mother moved her little family to a tract of land in western Tennessee, later known as Widow Benton's Settlement, where, with the aid of her slaves and this trusty son, she put up cabins and barns, a school and a church, laid roads, built bridges, and cleared the land for the growing of cotton. Here the boy grew to manhood, on familiar terms with Andrew Jackson, Sam Houston, and other ambitious spirits of the pioneer state. Faith in the great destinies of the West was the fundamen-

tal article of their political creed. In 1815 young Benton opened a law office in St. Louis and quickly acquired a large practice among the creole population, whose land grants, authorized by French and Spanish governors, were being challenged by American squatters. Elected to the United States Senate in 1821, he immediately withdrew from this practice, stating that his relations with the Federal government might prejudice the land office in his favor.

For the next thirty years, Senator Benton used his great and growing influence for the development of the West. A visit to Jefferson at Montecello rendered him a champion of the transcontinental trade route, and his intercourse with General Clark and the trappers and traders of St. Louis gave him unusual knowledge of the resources of Missouri Territory. Benton was a thoroughgoing expansionist, ardently concerned for the annexation of Texas, the assertion of our claims to Oregon, and the acquisition of California; but he was no less insistent on the development of transportation facilities and the promotion of the interests of the traders and farmers who were laying the foundations of future prosperity. Early associated in a legal way with Astor and the St. Louis traders, he was ever the firm friend of the fur companies, and put forth every effort to bring about the abolition of the government factories. Benton thus narrates the part he played in that controversy: "As a citizen of a frontier State, I had seen the working of the system — seen its inside working, and knew its operation to be entirely contrary to the benevolent designs of its projectors."

These views had been communicated to the Secretary of War in 1820, "but he [Calhoun] had too good an opinion of the superintendent . . . to believe that any thing was wrong in the business, and refused his countenance to my proposition. Confident that I was right, I determined to bring the question before the Senate — did so — brought in a bill to abolish the factories, and throw open the fur trade to individual enterprise, and supported the bill with all the facts and reasons of which I was master."[39] No less energetic and decisive was his campaign for the acquisition of the Indian lands, of which fifteen and a half million acres lay within the state of Arkansas and two and three quarters millions in Missouri. Treaties negotiated with the Kansas and Osage tribes by General Clark in 1825 and ratified by the Senate the following year, ceded all the territory between the Missouri and the Rockies, with the exception of certain carefully defined reservations. Benton indignantly denounced the charge that the government had not dealt fairly by its Indian wards, citing in evidence the various land purchases to prove that in the first fifty years of its existence the United States had paid $85,000,000 for tribal lands, to say nothing of its expenditures in the way of education, etc.[40] His personal knowledge of the vexations and hardships consequent on the uncertainties of Spanish grants led him to advocate that the cases still pending be referred to a Federal commission. Such a commission was appointed for Missouri in 1832, evidence as to basis of the several claims was taken and titles verified. The findings of the commission were later

affirmed by Congress, and the many tedious and costly suits were brought to a sudden termination.

The government policy as to the public lands was the object of persistent criticism in the new states west of the Mississippi, and Benton succeeded, by dint of persistent and unwearying effort, in securing some highly important modifications. The system of credit sales was abandoned in 1821, and the price per acre was reduced from $2 to $1.25; but the practice of offering the land at auction was still maintained, with the result that men with ready money secured the more desirable tracts, and squatters were often ousted from holdings to which their labor had given augmented value. Mineral lands and salines were not put upon the market, but leased to the developing companies, who paid a royalty on their output and charged a compensating price to the consumer. Benton was the consistent foe of monopoly whether exercised by the private speculator or a Federal agent, and he did not hesitate to attack this revenue-producing policy as prejudicial to settlement and development. Familiar with the headright by which any citizen of North Carolina might obtain six hundred and forty acres of Tennessee land on condition of clearing and planting it, at the nominal price of ten cents an acre, Benton advocated that the Federal government adopt an equally generous policy. He brought in bill after bill in behalf of a more democratic land system, and his efforts met with a considerable measure of success. The saline lands were put upon the market in 1828, the lead and iron deposits in 1846, and the preëmption right was

guaranteed to all actual occupiers of government land in 1841. But "the two repulsive features of the federal land system [remained.], — sales to the highest bidder and donations to no one — with an arbitrary minimum price . . . of one dollar twenty-five cents per acre." [41] Benton continued to the end of his public career to urge upon the Senate the advantages of a more generous policy, the reduction of the price to seventy-five cents and $1 an acre, and free grants to actual and destitute settlers.

Senator Benton's campaign against the salt monopolies created by the Federal leases had been early crowned with success, but his attempts to remove the import duty of twenty cents a bushel levied on the salt imported from Portugal and the West Indies were less fortunate. Missouri as a large producer of salt may be supposed to have profited by the tax, but Senator Benton thought the interests of the consumer more important. He argued that the domestic product was inferior in quality and high in price and unsuitable for curing beef and pork for exportation. The prosperity of a great industry was at stake. The farmers who supplied beef, pork, bacon, butter, and cheese to the mines of Missouri and the upper Mississippi, to the plantations of the lower river, to the Army and Navy, and to the Indian reservations, must have the sun-evaporated salt at a reasonable price, or cease production. The West India trade was also in jeopardy, for salt provisions made up a considerable part of the outgoing cargoes. Given free trade in salt, and "the levee at New Orleans would be covered — the warehouses would be crammed with salt;

the barter trade would become extensive and universal, a bushel of corn, or of potatoes, a few pounds of butter, or a few pounds of beef or pork, would purchase a sack of salt; the steamboats would bring it up for a trifle [17 cents per bushel]; and all the upper States of the Great Valley, where salt is so scarce, so dear, and so indispensable for rearing stock and curing provisions, in addition to all its obvious uses, would be cheaply and abundantly supplied with that article."[42] The advocates of protection were stronger and more influential than any influence the consumer could bring to bear, however, and Benton succeeded only in removing the duty on solar (alum) salt.

As to slavery, Benton, a Southerner born and bred, was wholly in sympathy with the compromise of 1820. He was not a member of the convention that drew up the state constitution; but he states in the *Thirty Years' View*[43] that he was the "instigator" of the clause which sanctioned slaveholding and forbade the legislature to interfere with the practice. He was "equally opposed to slavery agitation and to slavery extension," but he fully indorsed the right of citizens to avail themselves of this form of labor, and he believed the recognition of this principle important "for the sake of peace."

CHAPTER III

THE SANTA FÉ TRADE

A ROUNDABOUT and hazardous commerce had been carried on with the Spanish provinces by way of Taos, the old-time market to which the Apache Indians brought their furs. An Indian trader named Purcell (Pursley of Pike's *Journal*) had been led by the Pawnees up the Platte River and across the divide to this rendezvous of the mountain tribes. His success induced William Morrison, an enterprising merchant of Kaskaskia (later a member of the Missouri Fur Company), to despatch a creole, La Lande, with a small consignment of goods to Taos in 1804. La Lande did not return, and Pike was commissioned to ascertain his fate. He found the faithless agent at Santa Fé, only too well content with the treatment accorded him. The authorities had given him a grant of land and a business opening, for the purpose of preventing his carrying back to his patron information that might lead to similar expeditions. The publication of Pike's *Journal* (1806) and his *Dissertation on Louisiana* (1808) attracted attention to the rich resources of New Spain and the ease with which Santa Fé could be reached *via* the Arkansas River. Hidalgo's insurrection, moreover, gave reason to hope that the exclusive commercial policy enforced by the Spanish authorities might give way as soon as the creole population came into power. With the

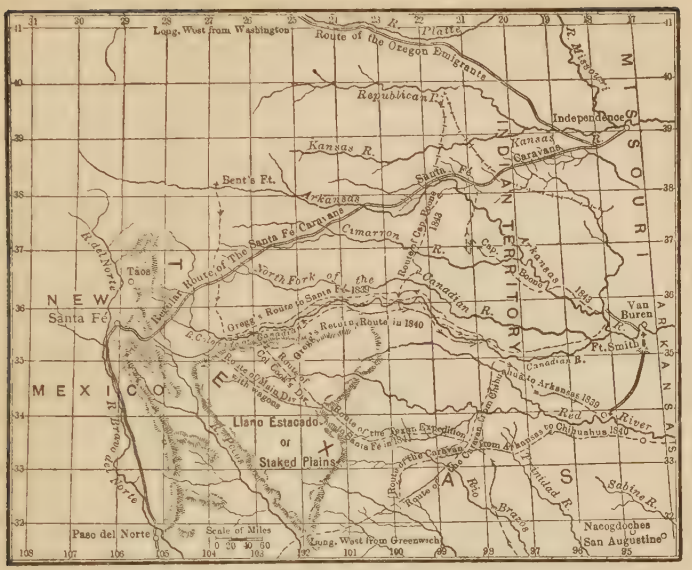
purpose of being first on the ground, a party of traders, McKnight, Chambers, and Beard, set out in 1812, following Pike's route to Taos; but the venture proved ill-timed. The *insurrectos* suffered defeat, and the suspicion attaching to American interlopers was only augmented. The unlucky traders were seized as spies, their goods confiscated, and the men, some dozen in number, incarcerated at Chihuahua. There they remained until the revolution of 1821 opened the prison doors. Meantime, A. P. Chouteau and Julius De Munn of St. Louis organized a trapping expedition that led them beyond the mountain boundary to the sources of the Arkansas and of the Rio Grande. Their attempt to secure a license from the *commandante* at Santa Fé failed, and they were arrested and thrown into prison, while the furs gathered in two years' hard work on both sides the boundary were confiscated. Chouteau addressed an indignant protest to the Department of State and had sufficient influence at Washington to secure compensation to the amount of $30,000. Daniel Meriwether, who had a similar experience in 1819, was less fortunate in the outcome.

In the autumn of 1821, an Indian trader named Hugh Glenn set out from his post on the Verdigris River with a cargo of goods for Santa Fé. The journal of the expedition was kept by Jacob Fowler, a Kentucky planter with a taste for adventure, who had gathered a party of twenty hunters to trap beaver in the Rocky Mountains, and was glad to join forces with the trader. They carried no provisions but salt, expecting to live on buffalo and

antelope, together with the corn, beans, and dried pumpkins purchased of the Osage Indians. The cavalcade of horses and mules followed an Indian road up the Arkansas, coming occasionally upon signs of other trapping or trading parties, until the Spanish peaks rose above the horizon. There, near the Chico River, they found a great Indian encampment — Arapahoes, Snakes, Comanches, and Kiowas — an extraordinary concourse of twenty thousand people, lodged in four hundred tepees and consuming one hundred buffalo per day. Chances for trade were very poor, however, for the assembled tribes could offer nothing but buffalo robes, horses, and some twenty beaver skins (Fowler complains that these nomad tribes showed no capacity whatever for trapping game) and there was serious risk of losing the goods by theft or violence. The appearance of a party of Spanish traders gave Glenn the opportunity he sought of finding his way to Santa Fé. Fowler and his men built a blockhouse on Fountain qui Bouille, the spot Pike had fixed upon for a winter camp fifteen years before, and from that point of vantage trapped the mountain streams, collecting several packs of beaver. In January came a messenger from Colonel Glenn with the good news that he had been well received at Santa Fé, that Mexico had declared independence of the mother country and was eager for trade with the people of the United States, and, farther, that permission had been granted Fowler to trap in the valley of the Rio Grande. Nothing loath, he crossed the mountains to Taos, following Pike's route, and camped on the Canejos only a few miles below that

explorer's unlucky fort. Three months' sojourn proved highly remunerative to both trapper and trader, and they had the satisfaction of recovering McKnight and his men. On May 12, 1822, the snow being gone and the horses fattened on the spring grass, the Americans set out for home, recrossing the Sangre de Cristo by Taos Pass. Steering directly east, "like a ship without a rudder" (*sic*), they crossed the Cimarron Desert, a desolate plain where there was no fuel but buffalo dung and where the only water was had by digging holes in the sand. "We are now In the oppen World not a tree, Bush or Hill of any kind to be Seen for When you take the Eye off the ground you See nothing but the Blue Horezon." [1]

Another expedition of even greater importance was made in 1821. William Becknell, of Boone's Lick, equipped a pack train and made his way *via* Taos to Santa Fé, where he was able to sell his American calicoes at $2 and $3 per *vara*, the price commanded by goods imported through Vera Cruz. The duties imposed at United States ports were comparatively low, the carriage from St. Louis was but two-thirds that from the Mexican port, and the consequent margin of profit was such as to attract other merchants to this new field. In 1822, the independence of Mexico being assured, Becknell repeated his venture on a larger scale, taking $5000 worth of goods in loaded wagons. Turning south from the Great Bend of the Arkansas, he undertook to cross the Cimarron Desert, having small comprehension of its terrors. The party nearly perished with thirst, and he was



THE SANTA FÉ TRAIL AND OTHER ROUTES ACROSS THE GREAT PLAINS.

forced to return. This same year Benjamin Cooper, with his nephew, Braxton Cooper from Le Mine River, conducted a pack train from Franklin by the Taos route, got safely through, and realized so high a profit on the investment that he ventured again in 1823 and brought back four hundred mules and a large quantity of furs. The year following, Colonel Marmaduke, Bernard Pratte, Augustus Storrs, and some eighty other traders joined forces and transported from $25,000 to $30,000 worth of goods over the prairie to the Great Bend and thence across the dreaded desert directly to Santa Fé. Wheeled vehicles were employed — stout road wagons, carts, and dearborns — besides a long train of pack mules, and the open plains proved easy travelling, water suffi-

cient for the arid intervals being carried in the wagons. The returns from this coöperative enterprise were very flattering, — $180,000 in specie and $10,000 in furs.

No legislative achievement of Senator Benton was more highly appreciated by his fellow-townsmen than the Federal appropriation for the survey of a road from Franklin to Santa Fé. The bill was introduced in the session of 1824–1825, evidence being brought to show that a profitable trade might be developed if the transportation of goods across the seven hundred miles of plain and desert were rendered safe. Benton submitted a report from Augustus Storrs, the Vermont Yankee, who had sold his cargo of cotton goods for $190,000 worth of silver, furs, and mules, and was very enthusiastic about the commercial opportunity. Congress appropriated $10,000 for the survey and $20,000 more for the purpose of purchasing the right of transit from the Indians. A Federal commission faithfully carried out this double task. The usual route as far as the Great Bend was marked by mounds of earth, but thence the surveyors followed the Arkansas to Taos as the safer way. The traders, however, preferred the short cut across the desert in spite of its risks. This part of the trail was undefined until 1834, when the caravan, crossing after a heavy rain, cut deep ruts in the sand, and thereafter the wagon track was plain enough.

The chief danger of this route was from the thieving bands of nomad Indians to whom the horses and ammunition were an irresistible lure, and many a

desperate encounter marked the path across the Cimarron Desert. The offenders might be Pawnees, Comanches, or Arapahoes, but the traders did not attempt to distinguish between them. They regarded all Indians as natural enemies, and visited punishment for the outrages inflicted by one tribe upon the first inferior band they encountered, regardless of actual responsibility. Such a practice bred a fierce hostility between the white man and the red, and the friendly relations established by Pike, Chouteau and Lisa gave way to endless retaliations and finally to a war of extermination.

The Pawnee and Osage Indians, in a treaty negotiated at Council Grove (1825), undertook not to molest the caravans in consideration of $800 worth of goods tendered them by the commissioners; but the Comanches were less tractable. For years they infested the trail, ever ready to swoop down upon an unprotected wagon or to attack small groups of hunters who had been obliged to leave the caravan in pursuit of buffalo. Gregg tells the story of the disaster that cost the life of Jedidiah Smith (1829), "one of the most undaunted spirits that ever traversed the Rocky Mountains." "Capt. Smith and his companions were new beginners in the Santa Fé trade, but being veteran pioneers of the Rocky Mountains, they concluded they could go anywhere; and imprudently set out without a single person in their company at all competent to guide them on the route. They had some twenty-odd wagons, and about eighty men. There being a plain track to the Arkansas River, they did very well thus far;

but from thence to the Cimarron, not a single trail was to be found, save the innumerable buffalo paths, with which these plains are furrowed, and which are exceedingly perplexing to the bewildered traveller." [2] For days the party wandered about the Cimarron Desert looking for water. Smith, who took the lead, came at last upon the river only to find it dry, but his long experience taught him that there might be water beneath the sand. He scooped out a hole and was rejoiced to see the underflow trickling in. He had stooped to drink when a wandering band of Comanches came upon him and struck him down. He was discovered by his men lying upon his face, quite dead, but the water he had found saved the lives of the party. J. J. Warner, who met Smith at St. Louis as he was setting out on this fatal adventure, describes him as "a well-bred and intelligent gentleman," who endeavored to repress the ardor of the novice in the fur trade by telling him that in going into the Rocky Mountains his chances were better for finding death than fortune, and that the probabilities were that he would be ruined for anything but such pursuits as suited the "passions of a semi-savage." Smith said that "he had spent about eight years in the mountains and should not return to them." Warner went on, none the less, to Santa Fé and to California.[3]

For twenty years (1825–1845) the Santa Fé Expedition was an annual event of the first magnitude to the business men of St. Louis. Franklin was the outfitting station until that prosperous town was washed into the Missouri, and for several

years thereafter Independence served as the point of departure. When steamers became the regular means of transportation from St. Louis, the superior wharfage facilities at Westport Landing drew all the river trade to that town. The start was made in April, when grass was fresh and water abundant. The several parties scattered over the prairie, each leader making his own choice as to direction and place of encampment, but all came together on an appointed day at Council Grove, ten days' journey from the Missouri, in order to organize for mutual defence through the region where Comanches were to be feared. There a captain and four lieutenants were chosen, and the force was divided into companies of eight men each, for guard duty. Every night encampment was an impromptu barricade. The wagons were drawn up in a hollow square which served as a corral for the animals and a shelter behind which to fight in case of need. The men, rolled in Mackinaw blankets, slept on the ground under the carts, for there were no tents in the caravan. The camp fires were built outside the corral, and there the sentries paced their watches. The most serious risk was not to men or goods, but to the horses, which were greatly coveted by the nomad tribes and stolen whenever opportunity offered. A few riding horses were necessary for scouting purposes, but mules were preferred as draft animals because they were better able to endure the long marches and scant pasturage. These, in turn, were prone to sudden panic and were often stampeded by the rush of a buffalo herd or a thieving band of

Indians. Oxen were tried in 1830, and were used thereafter as much as mules. They were less afraid of crossing streams and stronger to drag a wagon out of a bog, but less enduring. On the other hand, these slow-footed animals were less likely to be lost or stolen and were allowed to run at large about the night encampment, whereas horses or mules must be staked out or hobbled.

The freight wagons were similar in design to the old-time conestogas, though of larger proportions. A cover of stout Osnaburg canvas was stretched over the top frame to keep off rain and dust. They were as scientifically packed as a pirogue, for there must be no displacements on the long, rough journey. So skilful were the men of the trail at this delicate business that cottons, silks, china, glass, and hardware reached Santa Fé in as sound condition as if the goods had been conveyed over the smoothest of eastern post roads. Flour, bacon, coffee, sugar, and salt were laid in, at the rate of one hundred and thirty-five pounds per man; but the main food reliance was the buffalo. A herd might be encountered soon after leaving Turkey Creek, and the hunt was a diversion in which every plainsman delighted. Fresh meat was abundant for the first week or two, and in this time of plenty a quantity was jerked for the portion of the trail that lay beyond the pasture belt. Here, too, wood and water must be provided sufficient to furnish the caravan for the sixty miles march to the Cimarron, a veritable *Jornado del Muerto*. Beyond the Arkansas, Indian ambuscades and night attacks were

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always to be apprehended, and precautions were doubled. On three occasions (1829, 1834, 1843) the government sent a military escort, but United States troops might not cross the Arkansas where the greatest danger lay, and the cost of the expedition was out of all proportion to the benefit conferred. In 1834 the governor of New Mexico sent a force of cavalry to meet the caravan at the boundary, and the martial representatives of the two republics bivouacked on Chouteau's Island. For the most part, however, the traders were left to depend upon their own prowess and, being bred to the frontier, they were equal to most emergencies.

The journey of seven hundred miles was usually accomplished in five or six weeks, and men and animals were pretty well worn down when their goal was finally reached. For the citizens of Santa Fé the arrival of the caravan was the great event of the year. Not only did the traders bring the annual supply of goods from the states, but Americans were the most generous patrons of the cafés and places of amusement. There were important transactions to be conducted, not only by the local merchants, whose accumulated stock of furs and buffalo robes, wool, blankets, and mules was to be disposed of, but by the customs officials, whose charge it was to collect the import duties. The Spanish traditions of venality and double-dealing held with the Mexican régime, and the merchants well understood that certain gratuities would secure the abatement of the prescribed tariff. The duties amounted to sixty per cent *ad valorem,* but in actual adjustment the

trader usually got an abatement of one-third and the collector pocketed one-third, so that not more than one-third the legal charge found its way into the public treasury. American goods sold at double the original price; but fortunate was the trader who, after customs, expenses, and incidental losses were deducted, realized a profit of forty per cent. The ordinary profits ranged from ten to twenty per cent. The burdens and impositions with which the traffic was saddled by the authorities quite arbitrarily reduced the proceeds. In 1835 the governor of Chihuahua imposed a *contribucion de guerra* to keep the Apaches in check, requiring $25 from Americans and but $5 from natives. In 1839 Armijo exempted *hijos del pais* from the tax on storehouses, shops, etc., throwing the whole burden of the impost on foreigners and naturalized citizens. Thinking to secure farther revenue at the expense of the traders, this same governor levied a tax of $500 on each freight wagon; but the Americans minimized the charge by increasing the capacity of their wagons to two tons and a half and adding four draft animals to the eight previously necessary. Every deviation from the minutely prescribed routes, tariffs, and bills of lading was made a pretext for confiscation. "The trader can have three points of destination named in his *guia*, to either of which he may direct his course, but to no others, while in the drawing up of the *factura*, or invoice, the greatest care is requisite, as the slightest mistake, even an accidental slip of the pen, might, according to the terms of the law, subject the goods to confiscation." [4]

Mexican Arrieros with an Atajo of Pack-mules.

Arrival of the Caravan at Santa Fé.

On the return trip the loads were lighter, for specie and furs were less bulky in proportion to value than dry goods and hardware, and the mules and jackasses purchased in New Mexico travelled afoot. Fully half the wagons were sold to the Mexicans, and they brought four or five times their original cost; but the worn-out oxen were sacrificed at $10 a yoke. Not more than half the muleteers returned over the trail. Many died, broken down by the hardships of the journey or by the dissipations that ensnared them in the gay capital of New Mexico; many found their way back to the United States by way of Matamorras; still others settled for life in this land of opportunity. The neglected farm lands, mines, and commercial openings of the north Mexican states offered most attractive chances for investment, and the people were hospitable to strangers. There was an American colony at San Fernando de Taos and an American quarter in Santa Fé. In the second decade of the New Mexican trade, as the annual caravan attained larger proportions and the cargoes were increased, prices fell at Santa Fé, and there developed a glut of the market that made it expedient to carry the goods on to Chihuahua, Sonora, and even to California, in search of a profitable market. In 1830 Ewing Young, William Wolfskill, and J. J. Warner followed Escalante's trail from Taos across the mountains, and thence over the Mohave Desert to southern California.

The Santa Fé trade was never monopolized by large companies as was the fur trade of the Missouri.

The annual turnover of $130,000 represented the investments of some thirty different merchants, no man of whom contributed more than a dozen wagons to the train. Describing this trade in his *Memoir* of 1839, Nathaniel J. Wyeth states: "More than one-half these people are farmers and buy their goods on twelve months [credit] and often mortgage their farms and consequently are obliged to make returns the same year." The Santa Fé Trail meant to the men of Missouri what the Mississippi River meant to the settlers of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio, — an outlet for their surplus products and an opportunity for their adventurous young men. To the people of New Mexico it meant cheaper goods than the merchants of Chihuahua could send them and the establishment of amicable relations with the American frontier. When Santa Anna, dreading lest these commercial relations might lead to political *rapprochement,* laid an embargo on the traffic in 1843, he forced the outraged people of Santa Fé to question whether their interests would not be promoted by annexation to the United States.

New Mexico

An outcome of the Santa Fé trade quite as important as its financial results was the information concerning the north Mexican states disseminated through the United States by some of the traders. Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies*,[5] written by a man who had been ten years in the trade, was a conscious effort in this direction; but other men, less learned and not so well known, contributed to our knowledge

of the rich natural resources and political weakness of our southern neighbors. Jacob Fowler described the creoles as he saw them in 1821–1822 as a happy, hospitable, well-disposed people, whom the Comanches regarded with contempt. The Spanish traders were miserably equipped with goods, poor in quality and high in price. The peasants were in real destitution, bread and meat were scarce and dear because of a long drought and a plague of grasshoppers, and corn was selling at $10 a bushel, while a mule brought but $30 and the best running horse but $100. To describe the crudity of their living arrangements and their moral foibles would "r quire the pen of a Butler and the pencil of a Hogarth."

Even more extensive and graphic was the account of the northern provinces of Mexico given by J. O. Pattie, who with his father, Sylvester Pattie, went to Santa Fé with Bernard Pratte's caravan in the spring of 1824. The Patties had been pioneers for three generations, first in the "back country" of Virginia, again in Kentucky, where men of the name served under Benjamin Logan and George Rogers Clark, and then on the Missouri frontier, where the head of the house had defended Cap-au-Gris against a formidable Indian force. Sylvester Pattie was chosen commander of Pratte's outfit and had occasion to display his prowess in combats with Pawnees, Comanches, and grizzly bears. Arrived at Santa Fé, the Patties secured a permit to trap on the Gila River. Beaver were abundant, though the fur was not so fine as on more northern streams, and the take was a large one (two thousand skins), but

unfortunately their cache was rifled by the Indians, and the fruit of the winter's work lost. A new occupation was found when the proprietor of the Santa Rita copper mines, near the source of the Gila River, engaged the valiant Americans to defend his property against the Apaches, who were wont to pillage his supply trains and carry off the women, with small regard for the cautious Mexican garrisons. The elder Pattie remained here in charge of the mines; but the son, impelled by the *wanderlust* in his blood, undertook a second trapping expedition. He followed the Gila to the Colorado and, returning north of this *rio de los misterios*, found his way to South Pass, to the Big Horn, and the Yellowstone, and finally rode back across the Plains to Santa Fé, with a rich harvest of furs. The southern rivers had apparently never been hunted before, and Pattie's men frequently found a beaver in every trap set; but the streams of the upper Platte he reported "trapped out." Again the plucky adventurer was bereft of the profits of a winter's strenuous labor, this time by the governor of Santa Fé, who announced that the first year's license did not hold for the second and ruthlessly confiscated the furs. The young man then tried his luck in trade, going to Sonora and Chihuahua, and returning by way of El Paso. The *Journal* expresses profound contempt for the primitive processes of Mexican agriculture. The clumsy wooden plough is minutely described. "Their hoes, axes and other tools are equally indifferent; and they are precisely in such a predicament as might be expected of a people who have

Beaver Dam built of Cottonwood Branches filled in with Rushes and plastered with Mud.

Small Trees are used to support the Dam, hence its Irregular Shape.

no saw mills, no labor saving machinery, and do everything by dint of hard labor, and are withal very indolent and unenterprising." "This province [Sonora] would be among the richest of the Mexican country, if it were inhabited by an enlightened, enterprising and industrious people. Nothing can exceed the indolence of the actual inhabitants. The only point, in which I ever saw them display any activity, is in throwing the lasso, and in horsemanship. In this I judge, they surpass all other people. Their great business and common pursuit, is in noosing and taming wild horses and cattle." El Paso was even then "a nursery of the fruit trees, of almost all countries and climes" surrounded by "magnificent vineyards, . . . from which are made great quantities of delicious wine. The wheat fields were equally beautiful, and the wheat of a kind I never saw before, the stalks generally yielding two heads each. The land is exceedingly rich and its fertility increased by irrigation." The valley of the Pecos was "a rich and delightful plain," on which lay the deserted sheepfolds and horse pens where the *vaqueros* once kept their stock. They had been driven away by the Apache raids, and thus "one of the loveliest regions for farmers that I have ever seen" could not be utilized for settlement because these mountain bandits had never been subdued.[6]

Pattie's trading enterprises were successful, and he returned to Santa Rita with a well-lined purse. Sylvester Pattie, meantime, had secured a fine tract of land which he was cultivating to wheat and other food-stuffs, and was proposing to purchase supplies

in the United States. Better at fighting than at business, he had intrusted his affairs to a Mexican bookkeeper. This man was commissioned to go to St. Louis for goods, and the sum of $30,000 was put in his hands; but he decamped with the money. The owner of the mines, a Spaniard from Chihuahua (Pablo Guerra), was driven from the country by the decree of exile issued by the Mexican government in 1829, and the mines were sold at a heavy loss to McKnight of St. Louis and Curcier of Philadelphia. The new owners were soon driven off by the Apaches. The Patties, having lost all they had by the treachery of the bookkeeper, were forced to resort to the trapper's hazardous trade. Again they followed the Gila to the Colorado, trapping the region for the third time and loading their horses with furs. Unluckily they understood the Yumas to indicate that there were white settlements at the mouth of the Colorado and were beguiled into trusting themselves and their booty to boats. A brief experience of the tide-vexed current induced these landsmen to abandon the river, and, making shore on the west bank, they succeeded in crossing the Colorado Desert to San Diego. Echeandia, the governor, regarded the advent of these distressed Americans as wanton trespass and threw them into prison. There the elder Pattie died, and the son, having finally secured his freedom by serving as interpreter in an important business transaction, made the best of his opportunity to see California. Under a commission to vaccinate the neophytes, he proceeded up the coast, stopping at one mission after another and

renewing his contempt for the non-industrial ways of the *hijos del pais*. Repeated attempts to get possession of the furs cached on the Colorado failing, he made his way to the City of Mexico in the unreasonable hope of securing indemnity for his losses. On his way to Vera Cruz, the desperate adventurer was robbed of his little all by highwaymen, and only by the aid of fellow-travellers was he enabled to get back to Cincinnati. There this ruined but most interesting wanderer was discovered by Timothy Flint, the young and enterprising editor of the *Western Monthly*, and induced to write out his story. The *Journal* appeared in book form in 1831, and was read with avidity by all men interested in the future of the Southwest.

CHAPTER IV

THE COLONIZATION OF TEXAS

Benton strenuously opposed the treaty of 1819 by which the United States government paid Spain $5,000,000 for the Floridas and surrendered all claim to Texas.[1] He protested that the rich country beyond the Sabine had been given away, and he "wished to get it back whenever it could be done with peace and honor."[2] He deprecated the intrigues that threatened an embroglio with Mexico, but was ready to go to war with any European power for the sake of opening these fertile lands to American settlers. In 1827 a secret offer was made to the Mexican government, — $1,000,000 for the Rio Grande boundary or $500,000 for that of the Colorado; but the tender was rejected.

Meantime the dreaded Americans had succeeded in planting a colony in the very heart of the coveted territory. Moses Austin, the vigorous entrepreneur who had accumulated wealth in the lead mines of Missouri, now faced ruin. He had been deprived of his square league of land by the land commissioners of the United States, and the failure of the Bank of St. Louis (1818) had stripped him of his fortune. A man of indomitable fortitude, he determined to begin over again with an agricultural colony under Spanish auspices, and in 1819 he brought his project before the governor of Texas at San Antonio, having ridden

the eight hundred miles by the Natchitoches Trace and the Camino Real. The oath of allegiance taken twenty years before stood him in good stead with the authorities, and he had little difficulty in negotiating a floating grant of indefinite extent on condition of settling thereon three hundred families of good character and Catholic faith. Unhappily the hardships of the return journey broke the constitution of this heroic man, and he died in the year following. His son, Stephen Austin, then not thirty years of age, but already accustomed to heavy responsibilities, took up the task of colonization. He arrived at San Antonio just in time to learn of the declaration of independence, but succeeded in getting his grant confirmed by Iturbide, and located his lands between the Brazos and Colorado rivers, the old San Antonio Road, and the Coast.[3] The task of bringing in colonists of the right type was more serious. On condition that the land be brought under cultivation within two years, Austin offered to every adult male six hundred and forty acres, for his wife three hundred and twenty, for each child one hundred and sixty, and for every slave imported eighty acres. The nominal charge of twelve and a half cents an acre was barely sufficient to repay the expenses of survey and the transportation of emigrants and goods. Various untoward happenings balked the first two emigrations; the supply ships were wrecked, the Indians proved troublesome, and the settlers retreated to Louisiana. But adversity developed in Austin the qualities of a first-rate leader. His tact, courage, and

patience never failed, he overcame one obstacle after another, and after eight years of strenuous labor, he was able to turn over the government to a reliable body of colonists. Austin's settlers were men from Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana, of the best frontier type, energetic, honest, and enduring; but they had the pioneer's devotion to the rights of the individual. They took their obligations to the Catholic church lightly, refused to pay the acreage charge on their lands, brought in slaves in defiance of Mexican law (1827), and ordered their little commonwealth in thoroughly American fashion.

Emulous of Austin's achievement, other ambitious Americans, General Wilkinson among the number, were besieging the Mexican government for land grants, and it was deemed necessary to determine a permanent and uniform policy. The law of 1824 provided that grants might be made to *empressarios* in the proportion of fifteen *sitios* (a square league or four thousand four hundred acres) of pasture-land and five *labores* (two hundred acres) of irrigable land for each one hundred families (up to eight hundred) whom he should bring into the country. The families must be of good character and ready to accept the Catholic faith and Mexican allegiance. No grants to foreigners might be made within ten leagues of the coast or within twenty leagues of the boundary line.[4] Under these provisions, grants were made to various adventurers — Mexican, American, English, Scotch, and Irish — until the area so blocked out approached the present confines of the state. It is evident to-day that the arid

region of the Llano Estacado was impossible of cultivation and that the major part of these grants

TEXAS IN 1840. MAP OF LAND GRANTS.

could never be redeemed, but south of the San Antonio Road, settlement went on apace. The fame of San Felipe de Austin was spread abroad and the land-hungry looked to Texas as their goal. Two well-travelled roads brought this rich region within easy reach of Natchitoches and New Orleans, while a series of natural harbors rendered it easy of access from the sea. Americans gravitated to the Austin colony, Dewitt's colony, and to Edward's

enterprise at Nacogdoches, Irishmen to the tract along the Nueces River held by McMullin and McGloine, while Mexicans preferred *empressarios* of their own blood and sought De Leon's settlement at Victoria. By 1830, the population of Texas had grown to be more than twenty thousand — a figure that exceeded any reached under the Spanish régime — and the wisdom of peopling a land with men of calibre was amply vindicated.

But the Mexican government took alarm. There was grave reason to fear that this frontier would be preëmpted by Americans. In 1830 the Cortes forbade further colonization of a border state, cancelled all grants where the terms were unfulfilled, and summarily prohibited the importation of slaves. Futile efforts were made to introduce Mexican farmers, and convicts were sent in to work the roads with the privilege of becoming citizens and landowners as soon as their terms expired. The law of 1834, providing that would-be settlers from Mexico be transported to Texas at the expense of the state and supported for the initial year at the rate of four reals a day and that to each family be given farm implements, a yoke of oxen, and land to the amount of four hundred and forty-two acres [5] had no appreciable effect. In 1835 there were twenty thousand Americans and three thousand Mexicans in the province. It was quite impossible for the ephemeral governments that followed each other in rapid succession at the City of Mexico to enforce measures of repression in far-away Texas, and the restrictive legislation amounted to no more

than a helpless threat. When the decree (1829) declaring all children born of slaves on Mexican soil emancipated at the age of fourteen was protested by the Americans, on the ground that it would set free one thousand slaves, Guerrero exempted Texas from its operation.[6]

Under Austin's restraining influence, the Texans proceeded with some regard to their obligations toward the tumultuous republic to which they had sworn allegiance, until the Centralist revolution capped the climax of tyranny and misrule. Then they, in common with other Federalists, demanded a return to the constitution of 1824. Their grievances, as summarized by the convention of 1833, were religious intolerance, the exclusion of immigration from the United States, the perversion of land grants, the refusal of trial by jury and grants in aid of public education, the imposition of customs duties, and the excesses of the military. The protestants demanded a separate state government for Texas. Far from complying with this reasonable request, Santa Anna increased his garrisons and finally, San Antonio having been taken by the insurgent forces, marched to its relief. The massacre of the Alamo converted the movement for self-government into a war for independence. The issue could not long be doubtful. Santa Anna was far from his base of supplies and could not count on the support of the Mexican people, and his troops were largely convicts, serving under compulsion. The Texans, on the other hand, were fighting for their homes and the institutions which they held essential to liberty. They were

valiant, self-reliant, hardy frontiersmen, excellent marksmen and accustomed to Indian warfare. They were quickly reënforced by volunteer companies from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee, and Sam Houston, ex-governor of Tennessee and a protégé of President Jackson, was placed in command of their little force. In the battle of San Jacinto the Texans proved of what stuff they were made.

When Burr, an old man, broken in health and fortune, read the exploits of Sam Houston and his fellow-filibusters, he exclaimed, "There! You see? I was right! I was only thirty years too soon. What was treason in me thirty years ago is patriotism now!" [7]

Don Juan Almonte, the patriotic Mexican who made a tour of inspection through Texas in 1834, regarded this northernmost state as Mexico's most valuable possession, and he deplored the neglect that was leaving its colonization to foreigners. In soil, climate, and productive capacity, it had no equal among the federated states, and its commercial possibilities were unrivalled on the Gulf of Mexico. A series of first-rate harbors situated midway between Vera Cruz and New Orleans gave promise of abundant traffic, so soon as there were goods to export. Remoteness from the conflicts that were devastating the older states left the Texans at peace to pursue the cultivation of the land, the raising of cattle, the building of roads and towns; and their industrial enterprises far outran those of less favored sections of the Republic. The Spanish-speaking population

was only half what it had been in 1806, but the American settlements were flourishing. In the central department of Brazos there were ten thousand people, and in the Nacogdoches region ten thousand more. This was not due to the zeal of the *empressarios*. Most of the American immigrants had come on their own initiative and at their own cost from the adjoining sections of the United States, and they were lawless and intractable men who brought in slaves in defiance of the law of the land. It was of supreme importance that public-spirited Mexicans should undertake the peopling of this rich country. Almonte announced his intention of leading the way and declared his conviction that an eleven-league grant in Texas could be speedily transformed into a valuable estate. Soil and climate were admirably adapted to the growing of cotton, sugar, corn, tobacco, and wheat, while the natural pastures would feed great herds of cattle. Prices were low for the time being, because all products must be consumed at home; but experiments were being made in the navigation of the Sabine, the Brazos, and the Colorado, and transportation by sea-going vessels would soon be assured. Five thousand bales of cotton had already been sent to New Orleans and sold at ten cents a pound. Importations from the United States rendered domestic manufactures unprofitable, but two or three cotton-gins, a tannery, and the manufacture of shoes were already under way.

What might have been the result if the insurrection had not interfered with Almonte's colonization

project, it is impossible to say; but one thing is evident, Mexico could offer little better colonizing material in 1835 than in 1721.

Texas did not present an alluring prospect to the immigrant, by whichever route he entered it. If he came by steamer up the Red River to Natchitoches, the usual means of access from the western states, he must cross a stretch of pine barrens and clay hills; if he arrived by ship from New Orleans or New York, the coast appeared an uninviting waste of sand bars and shallow lagoons, and the lowlands beyond were wet and malarial. On the side of Mexico, the sterile and waterless tract between the Rio Grande and the Nueces River seemed impossible of settlement. Curiously enough, the ten-league strip forbidden to foreign *empressarios* by the law of 1824 was precisely the least desirable portion of Texas. The interior was a delectable country. A gently rolling plain drained by the half dozen rivers that flowed from the Llano Estacado to the Gulf, wooded in the eastern section and open prairie west of the Trinity, offered to the pioneer a wonderful combination of fertile soil, all-the-year-round pasturage, and down-stream transportation. The arid plains were covered with the mesquit-grass which grew low and thick and was self-curing. In the wetter regions, the indigenous growth was tall and coarse and ran up to a height of eight or nine feet, heavily seeded. In the river bottoms the cane-brakes grew rank and high, providing abundant fodder. So mild were the winters that there was nowhere need of stabling, even for horses, and water

and salt were always within reach. Hogs, too, might be allowed to run at large in confidence that they would fatten in due time on the native peanuts or the mast of the live-oak forests. It was a common saying among the pioneers that "in the North man lived for the beast, while in Texas the beast lived for man." According to the custom of the south United States, the cultivated fields were fenced in and the live stock was free to roam the open range. Only at the annual round-up did the ranchman take account of his property and brand the yearling calves.

Men of experience judged the prairies of Texas better farming country than Kentucky, for nine-tenths of the land was cultivable and the same crops could be grown, with sugar and cotton added. The settler from east of the Mississippi, accustomed to the exhausting labor of clearing the forest before ploughing could begin, who had often seen the better part of a man's life spent in reclaiming a few patches for cornfields which still remained encumbered by stumps and weeds and infected with malaria, rejoiced in the sunny open prairie where the soil seemed prepared by nature for the farmer's use. An English observer estimated the economic advantage of Texas land as follows: "A heavy plough and a strong team are required the first year, to break up the tough sward and turn over the soil. The Indian corn is dropped in the furrows and covered with a hoe, which with an occasional light ploughing to clear away the weeds, is the only labor bestowed upon it until it is fit to gather. . . . By

turning the grass down, exposing the roots to the sun, and leaving the soil undisturbed, the sward becomes mellowed in a single season, and while undergoing the process of decomposition, affords nourishment to the growing corn. In the ensuing spring, the roots of the wild grass are completely rotted, and the plough passes through a rich light mold fit for all the purposes of husbandry. . . . The superior facility of working open land, the saving in the wear of farm implements, the economy of time, and, of course, the greater degree of certainty in the farmer's calculations, with the comparative exemption from local disease, give a preeminence to the prairie over the timbered land not to be materially reduced by any inconvenience that may be occasioned by an inadequate supply of wood. It would be sounder economy for a farmer to settle in the midst of a prairie and draw his fuel and fence wood five miles, than to undertake the clearing of a farm in the forest. . . . Supposing the soil of both to be of equal quality, a laborer can cultivate two-thirds more of prairie than of timbered land; the returns are larger, and the capital to be invested less." [8]

The most serious handicap on the settler in Texas was the uncertainty as to land titles. The one *empressario* who had fulfilled the terms of his contract with the Mexican government was Stephen Austin, and therefore on his tracts only could clear title be given. Bradbury and Staples (the Rio Grande Company) had been assigned (1828) for fifteen years the exclusive privilege of putting steamers on the Rio

Grande on condition of colonizing the adjacent country; but the river was not navigable beyond Loredo and the region was adapted to nothing but pasturage, so the project failed. McMullen, who attempted an Irish colony at San Patricio, become involved in a scheme for diverting the water of the Rio Grande into the Nueces and was unable to meet his obligations. Dewitt died before he had brought in his full complement of people, and his title lapsed to the government. De Leon was equally unfortunate. Burnet and Zavalla apparently had no intention of colonization, but hastened to dispose of their claims to a New York company which, in turn, sold to would-be emigrants. These deluded mortals arrived on the Neches to find themselves possessed of nothing more than a squatter's claim. The revolutionary government added to the confusion by declaring all titles forfeit except for such men as had proved their loyalty to the American insurrection by service in the field, and later undertook to redeem its heavy obligations out of this one available asset. All soldiers were paid in land bounties, and land scrip was offered to the highest bidder whether resident or alien. Moreover, land donations were made in the form of head-rights of six hundred and forty acres to married men and three hundred and twenty acres to single men who could furnish evidence of three years' residence during the five critical years from 1836 to 1841, and a bonus of three thousand acres was proposed for every woman who married such a citizen. Land scrip as well as donations were in the nature of floating grants, and the effort to locate these was

attended with extraordinary difficulties, since no official system of survey and registration was as yet provided. Texas in the forties was the paradise of lawyers, as Kentucky and Tennessee had been fifty years before.

During the decade following on the attainment of independence, the Texans were hard bestead to maintain autonomy. Raids from Mexico, Indian forays on the northern border, and the prospect of interference on the part of France and Great Britain rendered the task trebly difficult. The embryo government was saddled with heavy obligations — the maintenance of an army and navy in addition to ordinary expenses — and the revenues were inevitably scanty. The population was wholly agricultural, and land, the only taxable property, had but low value. Foreign trade was slight and the prejudice against the levy of customs duties was strong. Such credit as the new-born state could rally in the United States and Europe was utilized to the breaking point. Bonds were issued, land scrip sold, and promissory notes offered in payment of debt, until such obligations depreciated to twenty cents on a dollar. In 1841 the total indebtedness amounted to $7,500,000, six times the total revenue, and there was no relief except in the drastic curtailment of expenses. The administration of government was at a standstill. There were no jails and no police, the postal service had collapsed, and only a handful of soldiers were available for the defence of the frontier. Certain enactments of the newly organized congress involved the state in prolonged embarrassments,

e.g. every head of a family locating in Texas was promised one *sitio* and one *labor* from the public domain, — a heedless generosity which attracted a horde of ne'er-do-weels and speculators and made heavy drafts on the one source of wealth.

The only salvation of Texas was in annexation to the United States, and for this issue of the long struggle, there was good prospect. To the slave states of the Union, Texas was an economic necessity. Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi had one after another been occupied by younger sons and surplus slaves from the seaboard states. Louisiana was already preëmpted, and the fat lands beyond the Sabine were regarded as the inevitable destiny of the slavocracy. Moreover, the great majority of the settlers in Texas were Southerners and slaveholders. Their declaration of independence was signed by fifty-six men, of whom three were Mexicans, five were from Northern states of the Union, and forty-eight from slaveholding states. The constitution adopted by this constituency was distinctly pro-slavery. *Vide* Section IX: "Congress shall pass no laws to prohibit emigrants of the United States of America from bringing their slaves into the Republic with them and holding them by the same tenure by which such slaves were held in the United States, nor shall congress have power to emancipate slaves; nor shall any slave holder be allowed to emancipate his or her slave or slaves without the consent of congress unless he or she shall send his or her slave or slaves without the limits of the Republic. No free person of African descent, either in whole or in part, shall be

permitted to reside permanently in the Republic, without the consent of congress." This acceptance of slavery as a fundamental institution attracted favorable notice in the Southern states. The legislatures of Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee petitioned Congress for the annexation of Texas, while the statesmen of the seaboard states congratulated their constituents on the prospective rise in the price of their most profitable export. Eight Northern legislatures promptly protested annexation. Interest in the annexation project was disseminated by three land companies financed in New York, which, having secured concessions from certain *empressarios* who had been unable to colonize their grants, proceeded to sell these very dubious properties to all the gullible whom they could lay hands on. This land scrip was scattered throughout the Northern states and served to attach men who had purchased it to the annexation project, their best chance of getting their titles ratified.

John C. Calhoun, Tyler's secretary of state, succeeded in negotiating an annexation treaty with the government of Texas, but it was defeated in the Senate (thirty-five to sixteen). The resentment among pro-slavery men against this thwarting of their hopes ruined the Whig party in the South, while the out-and-out opponents of slavery organized the Liberty party. Conservative men, generally, dreaded the reopening of the slavery question, and feared that the addition of a territory south of the Missouri Compromise Line and large enough to form five states would overturn the balance of power on which the curtail-

ment of the slave system depended. The Democrats, however, declared for the "re-annexation of Texas," and their nominee, James K. Polk of Tennessee, was elected (1844) by a good majority of the electoral college, although the popular vote was quite evenly divided. With this apparent sanction of their policy, the annexationists abandoned the treaty and succeeded in carrying through both houses of Congress a joint resolution in favor of incorporating Texas into the Union.

PART IV

THE TRANSCONTINENTAL MIGRATION

CHAPTER I

ACQUISITION OF OREGON

SECTION I

The Traders

THE westward movement of population was checked at the farther confines of Arkansas, Missouri, and Iowa by the apparently sterile nature of the semi-arid plains and by the Indian reservations which the government had located in this confessedly hopeless region. But beyond the Rockies, on the far Pacific Coast, rumor reported a region of limitless and quite unexploited resources. The Oregon country had been discovered, explored, and even colonized by Americans, but with the loss of Astoria, the Columbia River and its possibilities had passed under control of the British fur companies, and the Boston ships and the St. Louis fur traders were treated as interlopers. The immense financial resources of the Hudson's Bay Company and its highly efficient organization enabled the chief factor to hold any Yankee competitor at bay.

Under the treaty of Joint Occupation, American traders had equal rights with the British in the Oregon country; but it was the policy of the Honorable Company to keep them east of the Blue Mountains. This was not a difficult task, since the British goods were of better quality than could be made in

the States and, since they paid no duty, might be sold at lower prices than the merchants from St. Louis could afford. Moreover, the costs and risks of overland transportation were far greater than by sea, so that, in their ventures on the Columbia and Snake rivers, the Americans were hopelessly handicapped. Even in the open territory of the upper Missouri and the Great Basin, the Hudson's Bay Company was able to compete on equal terms. Its factors did not hesitate to put up the price of furs to ten times the normal figure in order to drive out an American competitor. It was the custom of the Company to set aside an annual guarantee fund to make good these business emergencies.

The *Journals* of Lewis and Clark had been brought out in popular form by Nicholas Biddle of Philadelphia in 1811; Patrick Gass' even more readable diary was published a year or two earlier. Both accounts of the wonderful transcontinental journey were widely read, and the possibilities of the Columbia as well as those of the Missouri became matters of common knowledge. A certain schoolmaster of Boston, Hall J. Kelley by name, whose interest in the Columbia region was first excited by the Lewis and Clark *Journals*, had been accumulating all the information to be found in the descriptions given by fur traders and travellers, and had arrived at the conviction that the opportunities there afforded for commerce, manufactures, and agriculture far exceeded those of the Mississippi Valley. He was fully assured that the American government had clear title to the territory — based on the discoveries of Gray and Ken-

drick — from the forty-second parallel to Puget Sound and Vancouver Island, and he therefore regarded the Hudson's Bay Company's assumption of trade monopoly as unwarranted and intolerable. The rights of the United States, he was persuaded, could best be made good by the actual occupation of the land by American citizens. To this end Kelley organized (1829) the American Society for the Settlement of Oregon Territory. The capital of the Company ($200,000) was to be subscribed in the first instance by public-spirited citizens, but each emigrant was expected to take one $100 share. It was anticipated that the government would lend aid to this national enterprise. Kelley's *Manual of the Oregon Expedition* was addressed "to all persons of good character who wish to emigrate to Oregon Territory." It set forth the unexcelled advantages of the lower Columbia; a remarkably even climate where cattle could be pastured in the open all the year round, a fertile soil requiring only to be ploughed and planted to yield better crops than New England had ever known, inexhaustible forests from which timber might be shipped to all parts of the world,[1] admirable transportation facilities afforded by the Columbia River, which was navigable two hundred miles from the sea, and by the many natural harbors adequate to the reception of sea-going vessels. The commerce of South America, the Pacific Isles, and the East Indies must eventually accrue to this favored territory. In a memorial addressed to Congress asking for "troops, artillery, military arms, and munitions of war, for the defence and security of the contem-

plated settlement," the Society urged as a reason for aggressive action on the part of the United States the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company was taking steps to colonize the country. "Already, have they, flourishing towns, strong fortifications, and cultivated farms." In order to forestall this alien occupation, the Society petitioned for a grant of power corresponding to those of the great trading company and the extinction of the Indian title to the Multnomah Valley lands. A republican form of government was in contemplation with freedom of the press, freedom of worship, etc.

Several hundred persons were ready to migrate to the land of promise, but the great expedition was delayed from time to time. The government was slow to act on Kelley's proposition and assert its rights of exclusive possession. The treaty of Joint Occupation was renewed in 1828, and no guarantee as to squatters' rights could be given. Moreover, the fur traders of St. Louis, who did not relish the prospect of having their hunting grounds preempted by farmers, threw various obstacles in the way, exaggerating the difficulties of the route, the hostility of the Indians, etc. In his *Manual of the Oregon Expedition*, Kelley quotes from the recent report of Mr. Pilcher, Indian agent, to the secretary of war to prove with what ease the journey across the mountains might be made by way of the South Pass and the Snake and Columbia rivers.[2] For the character of the Indians of the Pacific slope, Kelley had no fears. "They are fond of the Society of white men, and will long continue

to appreciate, and promptly to reciprocate honest and fair dealing. Nothing is more remote from the intentions of the Society than to oppress them, or to occupy their lands without making ample and satisfactory remuneration. . . . It is desired that each [Indian] head of a family receive a lot of land. That the Chinnook tribe be located on the back lots, in the seaport town, where they can be instructed, and encouraged in cultivating garden grounds, and where schools can be opened for their children," etc.

To each settler was to be assigned, after New England precedent, a town lot of forty acres and farm land to the amount of one hundred and sixty acres, with pasture rights in the public land in addition. This claim, guaranteed to every emigrant above fourteen years of age (except married women), was to be converted into a permanent title after two years' occupation. The point of departure was to be St. Louis. From that point, travelling expenses were to be met from the common stock, excepting arms, knapsacks, clothing and blankets, and wagons for the women and children. A deposit of $20 was required of every subscriber as a pledge of sincerity and guarantee of good conduct. Captains elected by each cohort of fifty were to have absolute authority *en route*. The plan was a good one, but the scale was too magnificent for that day of small things. It fell to pieces of its own weight. The date of departure was postponed from 1828 to 1830, from 1830 to 1832, and from January to June and July of the latter year. These delays were discouraging to

the more active and practical members of the society.

One of the men whom Kelley's propaganda had deeply impressed was Nathaniel J. Wyeth of Cambridge, a man of affairs who had already achieved an enviable reputation for business acumen as a pioneer in the ice business. His aspirations were, however, not political or social, but purely financial. He thought he saw in the unoccupied territory between the Columbia and the Spanish boundary an opportunity for developing a trade such as might eventually rival that of the Hudson's Bay Company itself. The success of the Boston houses that had sent trading ships to the northwest coast seemed to justify his hopes; the failure of Astor's enterprise he thought was purely accidental, due to over-confidence in British agents and the outbreak of war; the achievements of the St. Louis traders, handicapped as they were by a long overland carriage, argued larger profits for a post established within reach of the Pacific and possessed of an all-water route to New York and European markets. Wyeth meant to avail himself of Kelley's crusade and so applied for a "scituation" for himself and his brother Jacob in the expedition scheduled for January, 1832; but when the date of departure was deferred from month to month, and especially when he learned that it was proposed to burden the party with women and children, he became convinced that he must act independently of the Boston enthusiast. His project was explained at length to various business men of Boston, New York, and Baltimore whom

he hoped to induce to contribute capital. A party of picked men was to go overland to the Columbia, and there, at a post sufficiently remote from Fort Vancouver to give no umbrage to the Great Company, furs and salmon and such agricultural products as might prove feasible were to be gathered and stored. A Boston firm, Hall, Tucker & Williams, agreed to send a ship round the Horn stocked with goods for the Indian trade. It was expected that the bills for the goods, bought on a year's credit, would be paid out of the return cargo, and that a very considerable profit would be realized by all connected with the enterprise. Wyeth secured the $5000 needed to equip the overland party and succeeded in enlisting, under a five-year contract, thirty-two able-bodied and intelligent men. The organization was on a profit-sharing basis, familiar to the Gloucester fishermen. After the initial cost had been paid, the net proceeds were to be divided, eight parts to the promoter of the enterprise, two to his brother Jacob who was to act as surgeon and physician, and one part to each of the forty men who were to make up the full tale of the working force.

Wyeth took great pains to inform himself as to the conditions of success in the fur trade and the best methods of catching, pickling and smoking salmon, raising and curing tobacco, etc., and he spared no labor in perfecting the details of his equipment. The party left Boston in March, 1832, and journeyed to St. Louis by way of Pittsburgh and the Ohio River. The horseback journey across the Plains was made in company with Sublette's brigade;

but its hardships staggered two of the men (Jacob Wyeth and young Livermore), an encounter with the Blackfeet at the famous rendezvous of Pierre's Hole [3] disheartened the rest, and all but eleven turned back, taking their riding horses. Undiscouraged, Wyeth proceeded on his way, in company with Milton Sublette, and, aided by the friendly Shoshones, trapped the streams that empty into Snake River, and crossed the Blue Mountains to Fort Walla Walla, where his party was hospitably received. "At the post we saw a bull, cow & calf, hen & cock, pumpkins, potatoes, corn, all of which looked strange and unnatural and like a dream." At Fort Vancouver, Dr. McLoughlin was no less courteous, dispensing the hospitality of the place with an Old World courtesy very congenial to the wanderer from Cambridge. Here bad news awaited the promoter of American trade. The supply ship, *Sultana*, had been wrecked off Society Islands, and her cargo was a total loss, while the remaining men asked to be released from their engagement.[4] "I could not refuse. They had already suffered much, and our number was so small that the prospect of remuneration to them was very small. . . . They were good men and persevered as long as perseverance would do good. I am now afloat on the great sea of life without stay or support, but in good hands, *i.e.* myself and providence and a few of the H. B. Co. who are perfect gentlemen." [5] Nothing remained of the great enterprise but the furs cached in the interior, and the recovery of these was more than doubtful.

Fort Vancouver in 1846.

Wyeth had surrendered an honorable and lucrative position at home for this ambitious project on the Pacific Coast, and he now faced ruin; but pride and determination to wring success out of defeat, held him to his task. Valuable experience at least could be won from his unlucky plight, and with this in view he sought employment with the Hudson's Bay Company as an independent trader operating south of the Columbia. The proposition was forwarded to London and, biding an answer, Wyeth submitted to Captain Bonneville a plan for a joint hunt up the Willamette Valley and beyond the mountains as far as the Spanish settlements on San Francisco Bay. Having collected twelve men and thirty-four horses and pack mules, he set out for the rendezvous at Fort Bonneville on Green River, where he found the brigades of the American Fur Company and the Rocky Mountain Fur Company encamped in full force, together with Bonneville and Ferris and other independent trappers. Thence, in the autumn of 1833, the undiscouraged Yankee voyaged in a bull-boat down the Big Horn and the Yellowstone, stopping at Fort Cass and Fort Union to trade skins and robes for provisions, and so on to St. Louis and home.

In spite of the melancholy failures of the first expedition, Wyeth was able to find backers for a second. This time he hoped to meet the expenses of the overland party by taking out a stock of goods for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company whose chief, Milton Sublette, he had convinced that supplies might be had at much better figures than were

offered by the brother who had retired from the partnership. A new joint stock concern, the Columbia Fishing and Trading Company, was organized. Hall, Tucker & Williams again undertook to send a vessel round the Horn, and again a party of men was enlisted, but this time at St. Louis, where trappers and *engagés* of experience could be found. Wyeth had no need of guide or protection in his second journey across the Plains, for he was now *bourgeois* on his own account, and in his train travelled two distinguished scientists, Thomas Nuttall and J. K. Townsend. He reached the rendezvous on Ham's Fork in June, 1834, only to find that Milton Sublette had repudiated his contract. Wyeth's business sagacity did not desert him in this emergency. With characteristic energy he determined to turn his rejected goods and superfluous men to account by erecting a trading post on Snake River, hoping to trade with the Shoshones, Nez Perces, and Flatheads for buffalo robes. The post was erected at the point where the Port Neuf River joins the Snake, and was named Fort Hall after the senior partner in the Boston firm which was to reap no other gain from the expedition. Here twelve men were left with a hundred guns and rifles, while the main party pushed on to the Columbia.

Arrived at Fort Vancouver in October, the dauntless leader found to his chagrin that the *May Dacre* was only just coming up the river. The ship had been struck by lightning off Valparaiso and obliged to put in for repairs. The delay of three months had forfeited the salmon season, and the proposed

return cargo could not be prepared till the second summer. "We have failed in everything for the first year," Wyeth wrote home. "After so long an abstinence, I feel hungry for a little success." But there was no use in crying over spilt milk. The ship was loaded with timber from the magnificent pine forests of the neighborhood and despatched to the Sandwich Islands with instructions to bring back cattle, sheep, and hogs. Meantime, Wyeth set to work with redoubled energy to develop the resources of the region he had claimed for his own. He put up a fishing station on Wappatoo Island with kilns for smoking salmon and a rude garrison which he called Fort William. He explored the Willamette and fixed on a site for a farm, — a prairie three miles below Duporte's, "about fifteen miles long and seven wide, surrounded with fine timber and a good mill stream on it," — and two men were sent there with implements and seed for the first planting. The bulk of the force Wyeth led on a trapping expedition up Des Chutes River, a wild stream running through deep chasms and over precipitous rocks. The results of the winter's hunt did not compensate for the loss in men and equipment, however, and the leader returned broken in health and spirits. His experience in curing salmon was also discouraging. The Indians could not supply the fish fast enough for the smoking process, and his own men did little better. Only half a cargo was put up, and that of an inferior quality. Fort William made but a dreary residence. Most of the natives had died of the plague that had swept the length of the coast from

California northward several years previous, and the Americans suffered from various disorders due to dampness, overwork, and perhaps in some degree to infection. One-third the men were ill the greater part of the summer, and seventeen died violent deaths.

In the autumn of 1835 Wyeth went to Fort Hall with supplies, and again in the autumn of 1836; but the Hudson's Bay Company had built a trading post on the Boisé and their competition was too sharp for him. Concluding at last to abandon the field, he sold Fort Hall to the Great Company. He returned to the states by way of Santa Fé and the Arkansas River, and reached Boston in November of 1836, hoping to secure capital for a new venture on the Columbia; but the financial situation was not promising. The few men who had money to spare were unwilling to jeopardize it on so dubious a venture. Fortunately, his former employer in the ice business was eager to reinstate him, and Wyeth was able to pay all his debts and accumulate a competence before his death.[6]

The projector of the Columbia Fishing and Trading Company accomplished little for the furtherance of American trade in Oregon and nothing for emigration. His lukewarmness in this latter respect, it must be conceded, was due to a juster appreciation of the risks and hardships involved than the enthusiasts of the Oregon Colonization Society possessed. In a letter written to Hall J. Kelley in April of 1832, Wyeth said: "I shall at all times be disposed to further an emigration to the Columbia as far as I

deem, on actual knowledge of the country, that it will be for the advantage of the emigrants, but before I am better acquainted with the facts, I will not lend my aid in inducing ignorant persons to render their situation worse rather than better." Four years' experience of the hazards of the Far West must have reënforced his opinion that it was "impracticable and inhuman" to involve women and children in such an enterprise.

On both his visits to Fort Vancouver, Wyeth was received with perfect courtesy and given the freedom of the quarters; but he was allowed to learn none of the secrets of the trade and was definitely informed that his efforts to establish relations with the Indians would be effectively checkmated. In his *Memoir* submitted to Congress in 1839, Wyeth recognized the courtesy of the Hudson's Bay Company's agents while writhing under the sense of obligation to victorious rivals. "In their personal intercourse with Americans who come into the country, they are uniformly hospitable and kind. The circumstances under which we meet them are mortifying in the extreme, making us too often but the recipients of the bounty of others, instead of occupants to administer it, as should be the case. No one who has visited their posts, I presume, can say anything to dispraise his reception; for myself, setting matters of trade aside, I have received the most kind and considerate attention from them."

Americans who came by sea were no more successful. Only seven trading vessels flying the Stars and Stripes ventured across the Bar in the years between

1814 and 1842: the *Oahee* and *Convoy* from Boston in 1829, the *May Dacre* and the *Europa* in 1834, the *Thomas Perkins* in 1840, the *Maryland* in 1841, and the *Chemanes* in 1842. Their efforts to open a trade with the natives were uniformly unfortunate; the Indians were readily induced by the offer of better bargains and by appeals to their loyalty to let the "Bostons" alone. Kelley states that when the *Europa* from Boston came into the river to trade in 1834, Dr. McLoughlin immediately fitted out the *Llama* with an attractive cargo and instructions to follow the American vessel and undersell her goods, no matter at what prices, until she was driven from the coast. This trade ostracism was not wholly due to commercial reasons. Dr. McLoughlin had cause to fear the demoralizing influence of his irresponsible rivals. Wyeth brought in distilling apparatus on his second expedition to the Columbia; but he had the grace to respect the protest of the chief factor and abandon his purpose of manufacturing whiskey. The *Thomas Perkins* had large quantities of liquor aboard. Dr. McLoughlin bought up the whole stock and stored it at the Fort to prevent its getting into the hands of the natives, "as this was an article which, after a great deal of difficulty, we had been able to suppress in the trade." [7] The influence of the Americans was no less demoralizing to the tribes of the interior. There were from five to six hundred free trappers in the Snake River country, and the unscrupulous competition of rival parties was rapidly destroying the Indian's respect for the white man.

Meantime the apostle of the attractive gospel, Oregon for Americans, had been engrossed in his colonization enterprise. Convinced of the necessity of a preliminary survey of the possibilities and difficulties involved, Kelley had finally set out with a small party early in 1832. He went by way of New Orleans and Mexico,[8] taking along a stock of trading goods, culinary utensils, and farming implements. These were promptly confiscated by the Mexican officials in lieu of customs duties, and the secretary of the Oregon Colonization Society found himself a penniless vagabond. Undiscouraged, he begged his way to Monterey, but there new troubles awaited him. Figueroa, then governor of Upper California, had no liking for Americans. This particular specimen excited his suspicion by proposing to make a survey of the Sacramento Valley for the Spanish government. Thwarted in this endeavor to earn his passage to Vancouver, Kelley succeeded in inducing Ewing Young, a trader from Taos, to try his fortunes on the Columbia River. Horses were to be the stock in trade, and a herd of over a hundred was got together, as well as a gang of men — sailors and unemployed trappers — to assist in driving the animals to their destination. The journey was made over the trail of the Hudson's Bay Company's California brigade, but it proved too difficult for the Boston schoolmaster. He fell ill of fever and would hardly have got through alive but for the kindness of Framboise, one of the Company's *engagés* on the Umpqua. At Fort Vancouver, a staggering disappointment awaited him. Figueroa

had forwarded to Dr. McLoughlin by a northbound vessel a letter of warning, apprising him that Kelley and Young had stolen their horses from a ranch on the Sacramento. The charge was false. The actual thieves (if thieves there were) were some irresponsible adventurers who joined Young's party on the Sacramento and deserted before they reached the Umpqua; but the chief factor could do no less than post a warning, pending investigation. He despatched inquiries to Figueroa, and that functionary was induced to withdraw his assertion; but in the three months' interval between question and answer, Young and Kelley were forbidden the Fort. Kelley, who was still seriously ill, was assigned quarters in an outlying cabin and a servant to attend to his wants. Food and medicines were regularly sent him, but he was denied the pleasant intercourse of the factor's table. That intercourse was especially interesting in the winter of 1834–1835 because of the presence of half a dozen American gentlemen who had come over with Wyeth: the naturalists Nuttall and Townsend, and the Methodist missionaries Jason and Daniel Lee and Cyrus Shepherd. It would seem that these men, all of whom knew Kelley's standing in Boston, might have vouched for his character and extricated him from this humiliating dilemma; but no one of them dared to visit the discredited man except Shepherd, "the gentle Christian whom everybody loved." When Wyeth returned to Fort Vancouver from his excursion up the Des Chutes River, he found to his "great astonishment, Mr. Hall

J. Kelley at the Fort. He came in company with Mr. Young from Monte El Rey, and it is said stole between them a bunch of horses. Kelley is not received at the Fort as a gentlemen a house is given him and food sent him from the Gov. table but he is not suffered to mess here." [9] Kelley recounts that Wyeth came to his cabin, but his only words were, "Well, Kelley, how did you get here?" The wretched visionary, sick and destitute, clad in a tattered Mexican costume, obliged to accept alms from the hated Britons, and shunned by the only men who could be of use to him, bitterly resented this treatment from the friend to whom he had given the first information about the Oregon country. But Wyeth was himself in desperate straits and could offer no aid. Moreover, his experience in the mountains had taught him that honorable men might resort to dishonorable methods to tide them over an emergency.

Unlike Wyeth, who expressed unbounded admiration for the efficiency of the great monopoly, even while his business opportunities were melting away, Kelley railed against the Hudson's Bay Company as the author of all his misfortunes. He believed that the real ground of his exclusion from Vancouver was his known intention of colonizing Oregon with American citizens.[10] In the *Memoir* submitted to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in 1839, the embittered man asserted that he was "an object of dread and dislike to the grasping monopolists of the H. B. Co." because he was resolved "to act independently as an American on

American soil, seeking authentic information for general diffusion, and pursuing the avowed purpose of opening the trade of the territory to general competition, and the wealth of the country to general participation and enjoyment." He persuaded himself that his papers were tampered with and his food poisoned, and that he was finally hurried out of the country as a dangerous character. Dr. McLoughlin did give him free passage to the Sandwich Islands on a Company's ship, and a much needed contribution of £ 7 from his private purse. The latter courtesy Kelley does grudgingly acknowledge, but his obligations to the Company were ignored. In his *Narrative*, Dr. McLoughlin recounts the Kelley episode and adds: "On his return to the States, he published a narrative of his voyage in which, instead of being grateful for the kindness shown him, he abused me and falsely stated I had been so alarmed with the dread that he would destroy the H. B. Co.'s trade that I had kept a constant watch over him." President Jackson sent Lieutenant Slacum of the Navy to investigate the supposed outrage (1836), but he was soon convinced that Kelley had misrepresented the situation.

Ewing Young was a man of very different caliber. A Tennesseean by birth, he had engaged in the fur trade, first in Santa Fé and then in California, until, forced to the conclusion that this was a losing business, he determined to make a place for himself in Oregon. While Kelley was proclaiming his wrongs, Young possessed himself of an extensive tract of land on Chehalem Creek and there bred his Spanish

horses. He bitterly resented the accusation of horse stealing,[11] a capital crime on the frontier, and even when he was exonerated by Figueroa and given the same trade privileges at Fort Vancouver as other settlers, he cherished a stubborn grudge against the chief factor. Champoeg became the rallying ground for the "mountain-men," and the center of a zealously American party. Young undertook to set up a distillery as a means of restoring his depleted finances, using the kettles left by Wyeth for distilling vats; but this enterprise, the manufacture of "the white man's poison, the Indian's certain death," was earnestly protested by Dr. McLoughlin and the Lees. Young consented to abandon it on condition that his expenditure be made good to him, and the Doctor furnished him the means to erect a sawmill. Once established in business, Young's energy and uprightness of character soon rendered him a respected and influential citizen.

Kelley's campaign for an American Oregon was exaggerated and impractical because he took no account of obstacles and glorified his promised land beyond credence. The *Rambler* ridiculed his propaganda as the ravings of "a crack-brained schoolmaster of Boston." "Kelley's promises were indeed magnificent. According to him this transmontane Canaan was a land of milk and honey, full of navigable rivers, and practicable in every direction. The timber tops ascended into the very heaven; the soil yielded more to the acre, spontaneously, than the cultivated fields of Belgium and Britain.

No country afforded such facilities for ship-building; how easy it would be to transport the grain of Oregon, in vessels of Oregon timber, to India, China, and Japan! What facilities the country offered to the whale fishery and to railroad enterprise! The Columbia and its tributaries were literally choked with salmon." [12] The unlucky dreamer marked out the sites of future settlements, — a manufacturing town at the Falls of Willamette, a commercial town at the junction of the Willamette with the Columbia, a seaport on Gray's Bay. He even projected (in his *Geographical Sketch of Oregon*, 1829) a transcontinental railroad. It was to begin on the Missouri River at the mouth of the Kansas, "cross the backbone of the Continent through a depression near the 43rd parallel," follow the Snake River to Walla Walla, and thence "make a mountainous transit" to the southern extremity of Puget Sound, "there to connect with the interminable tracks of the ships of the great deep." Kelley sincerely believed that if the Hudson's Bay Company had not thwarted his efforts, this road would have been graded throughout and Oregon fully populated by 1840. Sharing the fate of all idealists, he was a generation in advance of his day. All that he hoped for Oregon was destined to come to pass, and largely through his mad propaganda. His pamphlets and his newspaper generated a romantic enthusiasm for the vast realm beyond the Rockies so rapidly slipping from American control. His suggestion that every colonist should receive a grant of two hundred acres of arable land appealed with irresistible force to the

homeless and unemployed of the eastern cities and furnished the foundation for the Donation Act. Kelley's project for the occupation of Oregon failed, but a new impulse derived from an entirely different source proved more potent than the unmeasured enconiums of the ardent New Englander.

Section II

The Missionaries

All explorers, traders, and travellers, from Lewis and Clark to T. J. Farnham, are agreed as to the high moral qualities of the Flathead Indians. Franchère thought they got their religion as well as their horses from the Spanish settlements. "McTavish assured us that he had seen among the *Spokanes*, an old woman who told him that she had seen men ploughing the earth; she told him that she had also seen churches, which she had made him understand by imitating the sound of a bell, and the action of pulling a bellrope; and further to confirm her account, made the sign of the cross. That gentleman concluded that she had been made prisoner and sold to the Spaniards on the *Del Norte;* but I think it more probable it was nearer, in North California, at the Mission of *San Carlos* or *San Francisco*." [13] Wyeth records the religious observances of the Flatheads in the journal of his first expedition. "Every morning some important Indian addresses either heaven or his countrymen or both, I believe exhorting the one to good conduct to each other and to the strangers among them, and the other to bestow its blessings.

He finishes with 'I am done.' The whole set up an exclamation in concord during the whole time. Sunday there is more parade of prayer as above. Nothing is done Sunday in the way of trade with these Indians, nor in playing games, and they seldom fish or kill game or raise camp. While prayers are being said on week days, every one ceases whatever vocation he is about; if on horse-back he dismounts and holds his horse on the spot until all is done. Theft is a thing almost unknown among them and is punished by flogging, as I am told, but have never known an instance of theft among them. The least thing, even to a bead or pin, is brought you if found, and things that we throw away. This is sometimes troublesome. I have never seen an Indian get in anger with each other or strangers. I think you would find among twenty whites as many scoundrels as among one thousand of these Indians. They have a mild, playful, laughing disposition, and their qualities are strongly portrayed in their countenances. They are polite and unobtrusive, and however poor never beg except as pay for service, and in this way they are moderate and faithful but not industrious." [14]

In the summer of 1831, before Wyeth and Kelley set out for the Columbia, four mountain Indians, two Flatheads and two Nez Perces, came to St. Louis with Sublette's train and, finding General Clark, asked him to send to their people men who could teach them how to worship God. They were courteously entertained by the man who owed so much to these tribes, and were told that missionaries would come to the land that lay at the dividing of the waters.[15] News

of this unusual type of Indian fell into the hands of a sojourner in St. Louis, who forthwith wrote an account of their mission for the eastern press.[16] Dr. Wilbur Fisk, president of Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, raised "the cry from Macedonia" with convincing eloquence, and appealed to the Missionary Society of the M. E. Church to send the gospel to the Flatheads. An appropriation of $3000 was made by the Board, meetings were held in New York, New Haven, Middletown, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and additional funds sufficient for the enterprise were soon raised. Jason Lee of Canada, and his nephew, Daniel Lee, were appointed preachers, while Cyrus Shepherd of Lynn, Massachusetts, went as teacher. At Independence, Missouri, where the missionaries joined Wyeth's second expedition, P. L. Edwards was enlisted as lay helper and C. M. Walker as hired assistant. From Port Neuf River, where Wyeth stopped to build his trading post, the missionaries went on with the Hudson's Bay Company's factor, McKay, "toiling through immense tracts of mountain sage, or, more properly, wormwood, an ugly shrub from two to six feet high." [17] When McKay stopped to trap and trade for beaver, they joined the party of Captain Stuart, an English traveller, for the journey across the Blue Mountains to Walla Walla. The voyage down the Columbia was made with the Hudson's Bay Company's brigade. Arrived at Fort Vancouver, they were accorded a cordial welcome by Dr. McLoughlin, who was glad of any civilizing influence that entered his barbarous empire, and advised that they settle

on the Willamette, where they would have the protection of the Fort. He furnished them horses, a guide—Gervais—and provisions for a tour of exploration to French Prairie, where lay the farms of the ex-trappers.[18] The site selected for the mission station lay farther up the Willamette, about sixty miles from its mouth and on the east bank (Yamhill Creek). "Here was a broad, rich bottom, many miles in length, well watered, and supplied with timber, oak, fir, cottonwood, white maple, and white ash, scattered along the borders of its grassy plains, where hundreds of acres were ready for the plough."[19]

The two lay helpers abandoned the enterprise, Walker transferring his services to Wyeth's post, Fort William, while Edwards opened a school at Champoeg, twelve miles below. Shepherd spent the winter at Vancouver in charge of the school that had been opened by Dr. McLoughlin "some time before," and the Lees were left to develop the Mission with such aid as they could secure from the settlers. A log house was built with implements procured from the *May Dacre*, and a barn raised. Dr. McLoughlin loaned fifteen head of cattle and gave £26 on his own account to this "public institution." In the spring of 1835 thirty acres was planted to corn, potatoes, wheat, oats, and vegetables. The yield exceeded the most sanguine hopes, and a subsistence for a considerable community was thereafter assured. When Slacum visited the Mission in 1836, there were one hundred and fifty acres fenced and under cultivation, and the cattle from Vancouver were doing well. The appeal of the Flatheads was apparently forgotten.

. Oregon Settlements in 1844.

The Lees justified this diversion from the original object of their mission by the statement that "a larger field of usefulness was contemplated as the object of the mission than the benefiting of a single tribe." [20]

So far as they had in contemplation service to the "mountain men," the change of plan was wise; but the Indians of the lower Columbia were far less hopeful material for civilization than the tribes of the interior. Lewis estimated the Indian population (1806) at eight tribes of perhaps one thousand persons each, but they were even then fast degenerating under intercourse with the trading vessels. Kelley states that when he was on the river nothing remained but the remnants of these tribes, and that the

sum total could not have been more than five hundred souls. The Multnomahs were all dead, and their villages in ruins.[21] The Clatsops had lost their tribal autonomy and had taken refuge with the Chenooks on the north bank. "All the remaining Indians below Vancouver live in the most brutal, sottish and degraded manner; addicted to the grossest intemperance, and associating with the whites in such a manner that there can scarcely be found among them a full-blooded Indian child."

Such were the people whom the Methodist missionaries undertook to convert to the ways of Christianity! They wisely began with the children, organizing a home school for their benefit; but under the unaccustomed strain of confinement and regular tasks the poor things sickened and died or returned to the degraded savagery of their own villages, "free as a bird escaped from its cage." [22] "There were more Indian children in the mission grave-yard at the Walamet, . . . than there were of such as were alive in the manual labour school." [23] Consumption and scrofula and intermittent fever were the usual ailments, a dismal preoccupation that left little time for training, intellectual or industrial. Indeed, Daniel Lee naïvely records that the amount of labor to be performed about the place greatly retarded the progress of his pupils, while the adults were obdurate to the influences brought to bear. An old chief, who came to the Mission to be healed of a wound, declared openly that "the Bostons should never make him good." A serious effort was made to reach the Indians through the offer of material advantage.

They were urged to locate on a piece of ground assigned to their use and to till the soil, and the Lees offered to assist them in the building of comfortable houses. "A man was hired to help them, and some efforts were made in order to induce them to work and help themselves. There was, however, so much apathy among them, that, after having used various means for a year quite in vain, they abandoned the attempt." [24] The demoralizing influence of the sailors on the river seemed to be greater than all the efforts of the missionaries. The missions undertaken by Daniel Lee and Thomas Perkins at the Dalles and by J. H. Frost among the Chenooks were no more promising. These tribes were more demoralized, if possible, than the Calapoosas on the Willamette. The bandits at the Dalles did show much enthusiasm at first, but Daniel Lee was forced to admit in the end, that while prospective temporal gain might "make them ardent professional friends and serious hearers in the absence of all higher motives," yet the conversion was only skin-deep.

With the whites, the missionaries had better fortune. They set on foot a flourishing temperance society among the "mountain men," and the half-breed children came eagerly to school. The mission station was on the trail that led to California, and many weary travellers "worn out by their long and hungry tramp" found rest and refreshment at the hospitable station. Lee's *Ten Years* records the passing of Ewing Young with his "twelve sailors and hunters," and of Mr. Kelley, "a New England man who entertained some very extravagant notions

in regard to Oregon which he published on his return." [25]

In May and September of 1837 two supply ships arrived, bringing twenty more missionaries, among them several devout young women, and the bachelor missionaries were speedily married. This entailed the building of more houses and provision for the future. In the same year a joint stock company was organized for the purchase of cattle, the settlement having grown too large to be supplied from the Fort. Slacum, whose ship, *Loriot*, was in the roadstead, offered free passage to Bodega for the party of ten commissioned to purchase cattle in California, advanced $500 on behalf of the Mission, and gave to Ewing Young, who was to direct the enterprise, a new suit of clothes and a loan of $150. The other settlers got together $1000, and Dr. McLoughlin contributed $1250 on account of the Hudson's Bay Company. The expedition returned overland the year following, reënforced by several Americans from California and driving six hundred cattle and forty horses. The horses were sold at auction and the cattle distributed among the stockholders at the rate of $7.67 apiece. The Mission thus secured eighty fine animals. The settlers were allowed to redeem the domesticated cattle loaned them from Vancouver with these wild steers, — an offer that was gladly accepted.

Dr. Elijah White, a physician who came out with the reënforcement of 1837, indicates, in his *Ten Years in Oregon*, considerable dissatisfaction with Jason Lee's conduct of affairs. The following year he was

induced to return to the states, "ostensibly" to collect funds and secure additional workers, but also in the hope that "commingling once more with polished society would result advantageously to himself and the mission." [26] The letter addressed by Jason Lee to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs (Middletown, Conn., Jan. 17, 1839) gives evidence that his views as to the function of the Willamette Mission had undergone a change. "The exclusive object of the Mission is the benefit of the Indian tribes west of the Rocky Mts. But to accomplish this object it is found necessary to cultivate the soil, erect dwelling houses and schools, build mills and, in fact, introduce all the necessaries and helps of a civilized colony." He stated his conviction that the missionaries would remain as the nucleus of an American settlement after their services to the Indians were no longer required, provided the United States government would guarantee title to the lands taken up and improvements thereon, together with protection and the laws of a civilized community. "The country will be settled, and that speedily, from some quarter; and it depends very much upon the speedy action of Congress what that population will be. . . . It may be thought that Oregon is of little importance; but, rely upon it, there is the germ of a great state." Lee returned to the Willamette in May, 1840, bringing fifty additional missionaries (thirty-eight adults and thirteen children) and $40,000 worth of supplies, a reënforcement that still further diluted the zeal for the conversion of the Indians. Sir George Simpson, who visited the Willamette Valley in 1841, charged the

Methodists with lukewarmness. "The American missionaries are making more rapid progress in the extension of their establishments and in the improvements of their farms, than in the ostensible objects of their residence in this country. As I cannot learn that they are successful, or taking much pains to be so, in the moral and religious instruction of the natives, who are perfectly bewildered by the variety of doctrines inculcated in this quarter." [27] The Methodist Mission was closed in 1844, and the property divided among the members.

The "cry from Macedonia" met with response from the Presbyterian Church, less generous than that of the Methodist Board in the way of money, but far more costly in human life. Two young missionaries, Samuel Parker and Marcus Whitman, were despatched to Oregon in 1835. Parker made his way through to the Columbia, but decided that the field was not adapted to his talents and came back around the Horn. Whitman thought better of the prospect and returned to the United States for another helper and for his wife, Priscilla Prentis Whitman. The letters of this heroic woman furnish our most intimate knowledge of the struggles, the successes, the failure of the Waiilatpu Mission. In the spring of 1836, Mr. and Mrs. Whitman, Mr. and Mrs. Spalding and a Mr. Gray, crossed the Plains in the train of the American Fur Company to the annual rendezvous. They were provided with the usual number of horses and beef cattle, but the quite unusual accessory of a four-wheeled wagon was added for the comfort of the ladies. Ashley had taken wagons

through the South Pass ten years earlier, but such a vehicle had never attempted the lava beds along the Snake River nor threaded the steep defiles of the Blue Mountains.

On the trail up Bear River to Fort Hall, the missionaries travelled in company with McLeod and McKay, the factors of the Hudson's Bay Company posts, and these gentlemen were indefatigable in their efforts to smooth the path of the gentle emissaries of civilization. Buffalo failed after Bear River was passed, but antelope and elk were abundant, and at Fishing Falls there were plenty of salmon. Snake River was crossed at a point where two islands divide the stream into fordable channels. Here the wagon capsized, and much of the luggage had to be abandoned; but when the axletree broke, the indomitable Whitman converted the vehicle into a two-wheeled cart. At Fort Boisé the wagon was finally abandoned.[28] In recrossing the Snake, below the Boisé, the ladies were intrusted to a rush canoe towed by Indians on horseback. "It is simply bunches of rushes tied together, and attached to a frame made of a few sticks of small willows."[29] Whitman had intended to settle at Grande Ronde, the rendezvous of the mountain tribes, but was dissuaded by the almost insurmountable difficulty of getting supplies into a region so far from navigable rivers. The crossing of the Blue Mountains was the most awkward part of the journey, and the western slope was dangerous even for pack horses. "It was like winding stairs in its descent, and in some places almost perpendicular."[29]

Arrived at Fort Walla Walla, the weary travellers were cordially welcomed by Mr. Pambrun and feasted on the good things of his little farm. They had now reached the country of the Nez Perces, but it was deemed necessary to go on to Vancouver for supplies, and here the hospitable Dr. McLoughlin gave the new-comers a hearty welcome. He was not very encouraging, however, as to their prospects among the Flatheads, and warned them that their lives were in danger unless they settled under the protection of one of the Company's forts. This advice was adopted, and the men of the party returned to the Walla Walla to build a house at Waiilatpu, some thirty miles above the Fort, while the ladies accepted the hospitality of Fort Vancouver for the winter. Boats and guides and supplies were placed at the service of the new missionaries. "Dr McLoughlin promises to loan us enough to make a beginning, and all the return he asks is that we supply other settlers in the same way. He appears desirous to afford us every facility in his power for living. No person could have received a more hearty welcome, or be treated with greater kindness than we have been since our arrival." [30]

The Presbyterian missions were placed at strategic points among the mountain tribes; the Whitmans settled at Waiilatpu in the land of the Cayuses, the Spaldings among the Nez Perces at Lapway on the Clearwater, while Walker and Eels, who came out in 1839, went into the heart of the Flathead country above Fort Colville. At all of these stations, every effort was made to teach the natives industry as well

as religion. Vegetables and fruits were introduced, fields cultivated to wheat, and grist-mills erected. At first the Indians seemed honest and tractable and eager to improve their condition. They even so far overcame their repugnance to manual labor as to till the fields and care for the hogs, hens, and cattle obtained from Walla Walla. But a quite unlooked-for source of dissension arose. The natives grew jealous of the waxing prosperity of the new-comers and began to demand payment, not only for the land, but for the wood and water as well. "It is difficult for them to feel but that we are rich and getting rich by the houses we dwell in and the clothes we wear and hang out to dry after washin from week to week, and the grain we consume in our families." [31] This state of mind impressed the hard-worked missionaries as both unreasonable and ungrateful. Dr. Whitman explained that the mission property was not his but belonged to the American Board, that he had come at the invitation of the Indians and would withdraw when he was no longer welcome. Another cause of distrust was that the medicines administered by Dr. Whitman did not always cure. When the sick persons had recourse to the medicine man, they were told that the whites were giving poison to rid the land of the Indian. An Iroquois named Joe Gray, who had been educated at Dartmouth but had reverted to the wild life of his fathers, came to the Walla Walla at this unlucky juncture and told the people that east of the mountains the whites had paid the Indians for all the land they tilled. He suggested that the Cayuses should insist upon their

rights. Nothing but the near neighborhood of Fort Walla Walla prevented an open outbreak.

Meantime the Catholic church had not been oblivious to the needs of this remote land. The Hudson's Bay Company had sent two priests to the Columbia district (1838) for the benefit of the French *engagés* at the forts, Walla Walla and Vancouver, and the settlements of Cowlitz and French Prairie, and, according to Sir George Simpson, "they had been very zealous in the discharge of their missionary duties." They could boast no less a convert than Dr. McLoughlin himself. Some time during the winter of 1841–1842, after reading Milner's polemic, *The End of Controversy*, he was baptized into the faith dear to his mother and his wife and to the French Canadians with whom he had so long been associated. It was an impolitic step so far as his Oregon interests were concerned, but it was taken with the chief factor's characteristic firmness. An antagonism between the Fort and the Methodist Mission is traceable from this time.

The Flathead deputation of 1831 had been noted by the Catholic clergy. Indeed, the two Indians who died at St. Louis were buried in the cathedral. When neither the Methodist nor the Presbyterian missionaries ventured to this devoted people, a second deputation was sent to St. Louis (1835) and a third (1837). The Jesuit order took up the neglected task, and in the spring of 1840 Father de Smet journeyed to the mountains with the American Fur Company's brigade. At Pierre's Hole, he met the Flatheads and preached the gospel to the assembled tribe,

baptizing several hundred. Immensely encouraged, the zealous apostle returned to St. Louis in the autumn for reënforcements, and in the following spring recrossed the Plains with two priests and four lay brethren and an adequate outfit to found the mission of St. Mary's in the Bitter Root Valley. The enterprise was planned for the civilization as well as the conversion of the Indians. They were taught to plough and plant, and wheat, oats, and potatoes were sown and harvested, to the amazement and delight of these aspirants for the white man's way of life. The following year, Father de Smet went down to Fort Vancouver to confer with his fellow-clergy and with the chief factor, and it was determined that he should canvass the United States and Europe for reënforcements. He returned by ship in 1843 with a considerable number of "black frocks." Thus strengthened, the apostle to the Flatheads extended his endeavor to other mountain tribes and founded the mission of the Sacred Heart for the Cœur d'Alênes and St. Ignatius' for the Pend d'Oreilles. Industrial development kept pace with the religious. At St. Mary's, Father Ravalli built a grist-mill, having brought the millstones from Europe for this purpose. For his sawmill, this same ingenious priest provided saw and crank beaten out of wagon tires. At St. Ignatius, too, a flour-mill was set up and a whip-saw run by water-power. The first church was built of sawed timbers which were put together without nails.

The first missionaries, Protestant and Catholic, were devoted and self-sacrificing; but the rival establishments, preaching different forms of worship,

had an unfortunate effect on the Indian mind. The confusion of authority was discouraging. Moreover, the natives had anticipated that the white man's religion would bring them prosperity, — successful hunts and immunity from disease. When they found that the old ills were not abated and that new evils hitherto unknown were upon them — the white man's diseases, the white man's preëmption of land and game — a sense of grievance and hostility took the place of their early hospitality. Apparently the gulf between the aborigines and civilized man was too wide to be crossed in one generation. It seems the irony of fate that the saintly Whitmans were selected as the victims of their futile wrath. On an autumn evening of 1847, the Cayuses suddenly attacked the Mission at Waiilatpu, killing in their blind rage not only Dr. and Mrs. Whitman, but the children resident in school and some American emigrants. The immediate result was a punitive expedition under the auspices of the United States, and the relations of friendship and equality between white man and red were at an end.

Section III

Dr. McLoughlin as a Colonizer

The policy of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the Indians had always been conservative. The aborigines were regarded as hardly less important than the fur-bearing animals as factors in their trade, and the continuance of the several tribes in their ancient hunting grounds was a matter of serious con-

cern. For this reason, liquor was debarred, and intermarriage between native women and the Hudson's Bay Company's men was encouraged. The chief factor himself had married a half-breed, the widow of Alexander McKay. The advent of foreign traders who brought in whiskey and vicious practices, together with the coming of settlers not under the jurisdiction of the Great Company, was naturally dreaded; but, far from discouraging colonization, the Company regarded the agricultural development of such territory as had ceased to produce furs in profitable proportions as a natural sequence; — witness the Red River settlement. By the terms of its charter, the Company was not permitted to discharge any of the Hudson's Bay Company servants in the wilderness. They must be returned to the headquarters in Montreal. This was a humane provision, quite analogous to the regulation that a seaman may not be abandoned in a foreign port; but the retiring employees of the Columbia district, seeing that this was a goodly land and well suited to farming, petitioned the chief factor to be allowed to settle there.[32] Dr. McLoughlin devised a scheme by which he might conform to the letter of the law, while providing for the needs of the men and at the same time furthering the ultimate advantage of the Company. *Engagés* who had completed their contracted term of service and accumulated £50 out of their wages, were permitted to take their families to the Willamette Valley and settle there; but their names were not stricken from the books. They were still servants of the Company and liable to recall in case of need. Seed

wheat, etc., was advanced from the stores at the Fort, on the understanding that the debt would be cleared with the first surplus product. Two oxen and two cows were furnished each settler on condition that all the increase be returned to Vancouver, but on no consideration were any cattle sold from the Company's herd. Implements and other supplies were sold to *engagés* at fifty per cent advance on London prices.[33] Wyeth wrote in 1839: "For several years past the Hudson's Bay Company have been in the practice of permitting their servants to retire from their employ, and settle on the Willamette; there are perhaps some twenty or thirty persons of this description, who are cultivating to a small extent on the bottoms of that river above the Falls (French Prairie). In these cases the obligations beween them and the Company are not dissolved, but only suspended at the will of the Company, who can at pleasure recall them at their stations; and this is often done, and the power to do so is used to govern them; their pay from the Company ceases during their absence from their stations, but is restored on their return." It was essential to the peace of the district that these discharged employees should be held in effective control. A definite colonization scheme was determined on during Dr. McLoughlin's visit to London (1840), and settlers were sent out by way of the Saskatchewan in 1841 under the auspices of the Puget Sound Agricultural Association.

Besides the Hudson's Bay Company's servants, there were a number of free trappers, who, finding increasing difficulty in making a livelihood from the

beaver hunt, were desirous of settling down as farmers in the Multnomah country. The remnant of the Astorians — Joseph Gervais, William Cannon, and Alexander Carson, Lucier, La Framboise, Louis Labonté, Jack and Philip Degré — were settled here, and one man, François Rivet, who claimed to have been one of Lewis and Clark's party. Other trappers, "mountain men" from Snake River and the Seed-skeedee, having heard of the beauty and fertility of the Willamette Valley, determined to recoup their failing fortunes by moving thither.[34] Farnham met on Snake River two of these discouraged trappers, Gordon and Meek, who were setting out with their squaws, papooses, and all their "possibles" for the descent of the Columbia. They and many of their fellow trappers were proposing to "settle in one neighbourhood, and cultivate the earth, or hunt, as inclination or necessity might suggest, and thus pass the evening of their days among the wild pleasures of that delightful wilderness." [35] The cabin of one of these squatters is described by Farnham: "It was a hewn log structure, about twenty feet square, with a mud chimney, hearth and fireplace. The furniture consisted of one chair, a number of wooden benches, a rude bedstead covered with flag mats; and several sheet-iron kettles, earthen plates, knives, forks, tin pint cups, an Indian wife, and a brace of brown boys." [36]

To all these would-be farmers — French, Scotch, and American — Dr. McLoughlin offered the same terms as to his old servants. Without his aid success would have been impossible, for Vancouver

was the only source of supply for seed, implements, cattle, and provisions, and the only market for their surplus products. At first sight the chief factor's plan of action would seem to go directly athwart the interest of the great fur monopoly; but to a man actually resident in the country, it was evident that the fur-bearing animals were being exhausted and that new commodities must be brought to the Fort or its trade would languish. Astor's scheme of a trade with the Russian settlements was successfully developed by McLoughlin, and for this trade food-stuffs were the first essential. The grain grown on the Company's farm could not supply the demand, so it was evident that an agricultural colony producing wheat and potatoes would be a valuable accessory. To the settlers, the near neighborhood of the Fort was an unmixed gain, furnishing adequate protection from the Indians and from foreign interference, as well as a sure market for their surplus products. For wheat a fixed price of three shillings a bushel, always paid in supplies at thirty per cent less than the trade level, meant the equivalent of $1.25 in the States. The certificates of sale given to the farmers and redeemable at the Company's stores served all the purposes of money. To enable the penniless to earn a living, the chief factor "commenced building extensively, at the falls of the Wallamette, and thereby gave immediate employment, at the highest wages, to all those who wished to labor." [37]

That Dr. McLoughlin's policy was not displeasing to his superiors is evident from the recently published

report of Sir George Simpson, who visited the Columbia district in 1841. He notes that there were at that date one hundred and twenty-six men, heads of families, settled on the Willamette — sixty-five Americans and sixty-one Canadians — making a total population of five hundred whites. "All these people have taken possession of tracts of country at pleasure, which they expect to retain under a good title arising from such possession, whenever the boundary question may be determined; and are generally very comfortably settled, bringing portions of their farms gradually under cultivation, and having large stocks of cattle brought from California. * * * We have this season purchased from these settlers about 4000 bu. wheat at 3 / per bushel, which will be disposed of to advantage by resale, and instead of manifesting any opposition to these people by withholding supplies from them, or putting them to inconvenience in other respects, it is considered good policy to deal with them on such fair and reasonable terms, that no stranger would benefit materially by opposing us in our transactions with them." [38] Sir George visited not only "the pastoral settlement at Multnomah Is." (Governor's Island at Willamette Falls), but the "Puget Sound Company's tillage farm" at the head of Cowlitz River. Here was a tract of eighteen hundred acres, of which one thousand was under cultivation, producing eight thousand bushels of wheat and four thousand bushels of oats and barley, besides a large quantity of potatoes. Here and on the fertile plains about Hood's Canal the land was farmed by tenants, — English and French half-breeds,

retired servants of the Hudson's Bay Company from Red River. The men of English blood were furnished with sheep and cattle, and cultivated their crops on halves. The French were intrusted with seed and agricultural implements, but it was thought they were "not likely to do well with cattle." The governor in chief opined that this region would be "very favorable for settlement and would find an outlet for a foreign market by the straits of de Fuca." "There is no doubt that that country will in due time, become important as regards settlement and commerce, while the country in the vicinity of the coast, bordering on the Columbia and Willamette Rivers, so much spoken of in the United States as the El Dorado of the shores of the northern Pacific, must from the dangers of the bar and the impediments of navigation together with its unhealthiness sink in the public estimation." A contrary opinion was held by David Thompson, the old Northwester. Thompson was now a broken and forgotten man, but he addressed to the English government a vigorous protest against the surrender of the Columbia River country, the most promising portion of the British inheritance on the Pacific Coast.

Section IV

American Emigrants

The interest in Oregon awakened by Kelley's campaign and Wyeth's enterprises was stimulated and disseminated by reports of the beauty and fer-

tility of the region sent back to "the States" by the missionaries. The Lees wrote letters to the *Christian Advocate*, which was published simultaneously in New York, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis; Whitman's articles appeared in the *Congregationalist* of Boston, the *Missionary Herald* of New York, the *Christian Mirror* of Portland. Even more stirring were the addresses made by the returned missionaries or their representatives in the Eastern cities. We have an account of one such lecture delivered by Jason Lee in Peoria in the autumn of 1838 which impelled a young lawyer from Vermont, T. J. Farnham, to lead a party of nineteen to the land of promise the following year. Farnham's enterprise added but eight settlers to the Willamette colony, but his report of what he saw and heard in the course of his journey to the far-famed Valley was widely read and had great effect in stimulating emigration to the Pacific Coast and in determining the American people to get possession not only of Oregon, but of California. During the decade 1839 to 1849, there was an annual migration from Westport up the Platte River and across South Pass to Fort Hall, thence down the Snake and over the Blue Mountains to Waiilatpu.

With dangers thickening about their infant mission, the Whitmans welcomed the appearance of white settlers. In May of 1840 Mrs. Whitman wrote, "a tide of immigration appears to be moving this way rapidly. . . . We are emphatically situated on the highway between the States and the Columbia River, and are a resting place for the

weary travellers, consequently a greater burden rests upon us than upon any of our associates — to be always ready." Considerations of humanity as well as of safety determined these devoted servants of God to give such food and shelter as they possessed to all who passed that way. In 1841 two parties of Missourians, forty-two people all told, went through to the Willamette Valley. "Those emigrants were entirely destitute of every kind of food when they arrived here, and we were under necessity of giving them provisions to help them on. Our little place is a resting spot for many a weary, way-worn traveller, and will be as long as we live here. If we can do good that way, perhaps it is as important as some other things we are doing."[39] In a letter written this same year, Whitman signed himself, "Your obedient fellow laborer for the salvation of the Indians, white settlers and passers-by in Oregon."

In October of 1842 Dr. Whitman made a hurried journey back to the States on mission business. Because of the lateness of the season, he took the circuitous route by way of Taos, Santa Fé, and Bent's Fort, and arrived on the seaboard early in March, 1843, after a hazardous journey. In April he was back on the Missouri frontier piloting a party of emigrants to Oregon. His caravan of one hundred and twenty wagons was the first to cross the Snake River Desert and the Blue Mountains to the Walla Walla. From the Shawnee Mission he wrote: "It is now decided in my mind that Oregon will be occupied by American citizens. Those who

Independence Rock.
A landmark on the Oregon Trail.

Crossing of the Platte.
Mouth of Deer Creek.

go [now] only open the way for more another year." [40] Nearly one thousand men, women and children followed the Oregon Trail under his guidance, with

EMIGRANT ROADS, 1859.

fifteen hundred cattle. The bulk of the emigrants came from the Western states — Kentucky Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, and Illinois — and were farmers, lured by the prospect of free land and by the insatiable desire to see something of the world and to better themselves. J. C. Fremont, Senator Benton's son-in-law, who undertook a survey of the route this year, found it already thronged with emigrants. "The edge of the wood, for several miles along the [Bear] river, was dotted with the white covers of the emigrant wagons, collected in groups at different camps, where the smokes were rising lazily from

the fires, around which the women were occupied in preparing the evening meal, and the children playing in the grass; and herds of cattle grazing about in the bottom, had an air of quiet security, and civilized comfort, that made a rare sight for the traveller in such a remote wilderness." [41]

While in Washington in the spring of 1843, Whitman had some conference with the secretary of war, and in consequence submitted a statement concerning the difficulties and dangers of the route and the draft of a bill proposing that the government provide military protection and a series of agricultural stations at strategic points along the Trail. The river crossings were suggested as the most desirable posts, because here the Indians were prone to fall upon the unguarded cattle, and here, too, soil and water supply were apt to make feasible the cultivation of wheat and other food needed by the people. Whitman thought such stations would be self-supporting, for the sale of supplies to the travellers would suffice for all money expense. Cattle and horses would be raised to make good the losses suffered by the trains, and blacksmiths and carpenters should be at hand to repair damages to the wagons. This admirable proposition was not submitted to Congress because the unsettled state of the boundary question rendered Oregon a delicate subject; but the service which Whitman suggested should be undertaken by Uncle Sam was soon appropriated by private citizens. Fort Hall and Fort Boisé and Fort Laramie—the American Fur Company's post on the South Platte—were already driv-

ing a thriving trade in emigrants' supplies, and another, Fort Bridger, was built this same year by a quondam fur trader, James Bridger.

Even more helpful to the on-coming Americans was the chief factor at Fort Vancouver. As the parties of way-worn emigrants came down the Columbia, ragged and destitute, they were received at the Hudson's Bay Company trading post as at a mediæval hospice. The thievish Indians at the Dalles and at the Cascades were warned not to molest the white men, the sick were taken into the hospital and tended by the post physician, food and shelter were furnished the women and children free of charge until they could be removed to the settlement, seed wheat was provided for the first sowing, and cattle, oxen, cows, and hogs were loaned on the same terms as to the Company's men. This assistance was offered by Dr. McLoughlin on his own responsibility and at his personal cost, because it was impossible for a man of his training and in his position to see human beings suffer from hunger and cold. His philanthropy was poorly requited. Burnet, himself a pioneer and a Missourian, states, "Many of our immigrants were unworthy of the favors they received, and only returned abuse for generosity."[42] An immigrant of 1844, Joseph Watt, makes a similar confession: "When we started to Oregon, we were all prejudiced against the Hudson's Bay Company, and Dr. McLoughlin, being Chief Factor of the Company for Oregon, came in for a double share of that feeling. I think a great deal of this was caused by the

reports of missionaries and adverse traders, imbuing us with a feeling that it was our mission to bring this country under the jurisdiction of the Stars and Stripes. But when we found him anxious to assist us, nervous at our situation on being so late, and doing so much without charge, — letting us have of his store, and waiting without interest, until we could make a farm and pay him from the surplus products of such farm, the prejudice heretofore existing began to be rapidly allayed. We did not know that every dollar's worth of provisions, etc., he gave us, all advice and assistance in every shape, was against the positive orders of the Hudson Bay Company. . . . In this connection I am sorry to say that thousands of dollars [$60,000] virtually loaned by him to settlers at different times in those early days, was never paid, as an examination of his books and papers will amply testify." [43]

Dr. McLoughlin probably never read de la Rochefoucauld's bitter maxim, If you wish to make a man your enemy, do him a kindness he can never repay; but he had abundant reason to realize its truth. The details of the chief factor's relations with the Company during these critical years will not be known until a fuller study of the records can be made. It is probable that some one reported his impolitic generosity to the London Office. Certain it is that he was summoned to London in 1845 and soon after resigned his post. His position under the treaty of Joint Occupation was a difficult one. The boundary was not defined, but the suggestions given by Governor Simpson pointed to the Columbia

River as the probable line of division. The Willamette Valley might surely be regarded as open to American enterprise. Traders could be driven out by competitive methods; but in the matter of colonization the United States clearly had the advantage, and the Americans by this time far outnumbered any force the chief factor could bring to bear. They were hot-headed frontiersmen, moreover, who knew how to handle their rifles, and the first attempt to dislodge them would certainly precipitate war. McLoughlin's *Narrative*, written to justify his action in the minds of the London directors, adduces the fact that the immigrants "came from that part of the United States most hostile in feeling to British interests," [44] and he cites Irving's *Astoria* as highly provocative of the belief that the United States had been unfairly treated.

Section V

Congressional Intervention

A resolution that inquiry be made as to the condition of the American settlements on the Pacific Ocean and as to the expediency of occupying the Columbia River, was introduced in the Congressional session of 1820–1821, — only two years after the treaty of Joint Occupation had been concluded, — by Dr. Floyd, senator from Virginia. Thomas Benton was not yet a member of the Senate, but he was in Washington urging Missouri's right to statehood, and he used his influence in behalf of the lost territory. He relates in the *Thirty Years' View* [45] that he and Floyd were stop-

ping at the same hotel with Ramsay Crooks and Russell Farnham, and that the extension of the fur trade in this direction was a matter of frequent discussion. Floyd's bill passed the second reading and was then dropped by tacit consent. It was supported by an impressive array of information and statistics supplied by Hall J. Kelley, and the arguments advanced, in addition to the recovery of the territory and the advantage to the fur trade, were the desirability of having a supply station for whaling vessels on this coast and the promotion of commerce with Asia. This last point appealed to Benton's fervid fancy and he ventured to prophesy, "The valley of the Columbia might become the granary of China and Japan, and an outlet to their imprisoned and exuberant population." [46] Undiscouraged by the initial failure, Benton himself introduced a bill (1825) proposing that the defence of the Columbia be undertaken in order that Americans might have equal chances with the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company.[47] He opposed the renewal of the treaty of Joint Occupation (1828) "with all the zeal and ability of which I was master," and he found six western senators to vote with him. The renewal for an indefinite period of an arrangement that gave the great British monopoly a free hand in Oregon aroused his indignant scorn, and the failure of the Ashburton Treaty (1842) to settle the boundary question, he denounced as little short of treason. The attempt to colonize Puget Sound with emigrants from Canada and Great Britain he proclaimed a defiance of the Monroe Doctrine.

Meantime the Oregon controversy was being settled by the emigrants. They were pouring into the country, — one hundred and twenty-five in 1842 and eight hundred and seventy-five in 1843, — and they took up land in the Willamette Valley and built cabins, quite regardless of treaty obligations or United States law. In May, 1843, they met in convention at Champoeg (Young's ranch) and organized a provisional government.[48] Dr. McLoughlin was powerless to interfere, even had he desired to do so, and when in 1845 word came that the British government would not undertake to protect Fort Vancouver, the chief factor and all the British residents took oath to support the newly constituted authorities, reserving, as did the Americans, allegiance due to the home government.[49] In this same year, L. F. Linn, junior senator from Missouri, brought forward a bill providing for the erection of five blockhouses along the Oregon Trail for the protection of emigrants and granting farms in the disputed territory to *bona fide* settlers.[50] The bill failed to pass, but the mere proposal to allow six hundred and forty acres to every head of a family with one hundred and sixty acres to his wife and one hundred and sixty acres to each child under eighteen years, at the end of five years' cultivation — served as a new stimulus to the westward movement. Eighteen hundred people followed the Trail in 1844 and three thousand in 1845. By the end of 1845, there were six thousand Americans in Oregon. The emigration of the next year doubled the number and determined the fate of the country.

The inauguration of President Polk, a thoroughgoing expansionist, in 1846, settled the policy of the government. The Democratic platform had fixed upon 54° 40′, the southern boundary of the Russian dominions (determined by treaty in 1824), as the northern limit of the American possessions; but the soberer statesmen, including Benton, regarded this claim as untenable. Great Britain was ready to compromise at the forty-ninth parallel, and this moderate policy prevailed in the treaty of 1846. The Donation Act of 1850 finally realized the liberal land policy proposed by Hall, Whitman, and Linn. To every citizen of the United States who had settled in Oregon before the passage of the bill, including half-breeds, was allotted land to the amount of three hundred and twenty acres; to his wife, if he was married or about to be married, three hundred and twenty acres more. To all Americans who should settle in the territory before 1853, one hundred and sixty acres for the man and one hundred and sixty more for the wife. To avail themselves of this legislation, Dr. McLoughlin and others of the Hudson's Bay Company officials took out citizens' papers. The attempt to open this newly acquired territory to slave labor failed.

The American settlers had entered upon a goodly heritage and they proceeded to make the most of it. The Hudson's Bay Company was now the interloper, and its property rights in the territory were given slight regard. The admirable mill site at Willamette Falls which Dr. McLoughlin had developed in behalf of the Company, blasting a mill-

race and collecting squared timber and machinery for a saw-mill, was claimed by the Methodist Mission. Oregon City was the most promising town site on the Willamette and here a flourishing settlement had sprung up. Palmer described it in 1845 as having one hundred houses and six hundred inhabitants. "There are two grist mills; one owned by M'Laughlin, having three sets of buhr runners, and will compare well with most of the mills in the United States; the other is a smaller mill, owned by Governor Abernethy and Mr. Beers. At each of these grist-mills there are also saw-mills which cut a great deal of plank for the use of emigrants. There are four stores, two taverns, one hatter, one tannery, three tailor shops, two cabinet-makers, two silversmiths, one cooper, two blacksmiths, one physician, three lawyers, one printing office, . . . one lath machine, and a good brick yard in active operation. There are also quite a number of carpenters, masons etc. in constant employment, at good wages, in and about this village." [51] On his own behalf, Dr. McLoughlin claimed a tract of six hundred and forty acres on the river bank at this point, where he had put a number of houses and projected a town. These prior rights could not be gainsaid except by power of eminent domain; therefore representations were made to Congress that brought about the incorporation of Section Eleven into the Donation Act, reserving these lands as financial foundation for a state university. Under this show of legality, Dr. McLoughlin's tract was sold to the men who had secured the legislation.[52]

The broken-hearted old man protested without avail. "I founded this settlement and prevented a war between the United States and Great Britain, and for doing this peaceably and quietly, I was treated by the British in such a manner that from self-respect I resigned my situation in the Hudson's Bay Company's service, by which I sacrificed $12000 per annum, and the 'Oregon Land Bill' shows the treatment I received from the Americans." [53]

The boundary treaty had reserved the right of the Hudson's Bay Company to navigate the Columbia and to continue its trading operations until the expiration of its charter, although these privileges were hardly worth prosecuting now that the beaver were being supplanted by cultivation and American vessels sailed up the roadstead bringing goods from the United States and carrying produce to California and the Sandwich Islands. When the great British company withdrew in 1859, the property at the several posts was offered to the United States government for $1,000,000. A commission was appointed to estimate the value of the improvements at Fort Vancouver. The property had been so looted and wasted by the squatters who hurried to take possession as soon as it was vacated, that the commissioners found justification for appraising this estate at $250!

CHAPTER II

THE MORMON MIGRATION

Thus far the dominant motive in the westward movement had been the demand for new lands, the desire to better material conditions. The initial impulse in the peopling of the Great Basin was given by religious persecution. Like the Pilgrims who founded Plymouth Colony, the Mormon leaders sought an unoccupied country where they might be free to worship God according to their own convictions and might build a commonwealth after their own notions of moral and spiritual well-being. First in Ohio and then in Missouri, they had attempted to establish a community patterned upon the revelations enunciated by their prophet, Joseph Smith. Such an enterprise was of necessity exclusive, and this exclusiveness, coupled with their projects of universal dominion, aroused the envy and ill-will of their "Gentile" neighbors. Driven from their Missouri homes by mob violence (Independence, 1831; Far West, 1838) and forced to abandon lands and property, they found refuge in Illinois. Commerce, a little settlement on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi, was purchased by their agent and rechristened Nauvoo. There, by dint of thrift and solidarity, the Latter Day Saints soon acquired farms, started manufactures, and accumulated considerable wealth. Missionaries were sent through-

out the civilized world (1840) to enlist converts and solicit financial aid for the New Jerusalem. By 1844, thirty thousand Mormons were gathered at Nauvoo, and twice as many disciples in the Eastern states, in England, in Scandinavia, and in Germany, were preparing to join their revered leader in this new Zion.

The frontier population of Illinois was hardly less lawless than that of Missouri. River pirates, refugees from justice, half-breed Indians, defiant squatters, mingled with the law-abiding element, both in Nauvoo and in the surrounding country. The Mormons, on the other hand, were charged with harboring cattle thieves, counterfeiters, and polygamists. It is not unlikely that some of the more ignorant and reckless brethren interpreted as immediate in application the prediction that the saints should inherit the earth, and so regarded the theft of cattle and grain from Gentile farmers as justifiable,—the "spoiling of the Egyptians" as the phrase was. The authorities were both unwilling and unable to enforce the law against either contestant, words waxed to blows, and in the end the much-enduring Mormons were once more forced to migrate. A scant space of six months was allowed them in which to sell their possessions and purchase the wagons, oxen, and supplies for this third decampment. Their determination to go into a far wilderness, beyond the reach of their persecutors, was sealed by the betrayal and murder of Joseph Smith. That crime was the final demonstration of the duplicity of the Gentile world and the necessity of

building an independent commonwealth where the Saints might dwell in peace and safety. No true Mormon hesitated to face the issue.

In February, 1846, the advance-guard crossed the Mississippi and formed a temporary camp at Sugar Creek, about nine miles back from the river. Early in March, sixteen hundred men, women, and children set out thence to cross the rolling plains of southern Iowa. Wood, water, and game were abundant, and there was no difficulty in securing food from the farmers along the route in exchange for labor. Arrived at Council Bluffs, they crossed the Missouri and camped in the Indian reservation. Here among the Ottawas or in the Pottawattamie bottoms on the east bank of the river, the refugees found sanctuary. For twenty years thereafter, the Bluffs was the point of departure for the Mormon who had set his face Zionward, and a "Winter Quarters" was maintained where the emigrants might recuperate and secure the outfit for their journey across the plains.[1] Here fields were planted and cattle gathered for the use of the ever increasing tide. A grist-mill was built to prepare the flour, and blacksmiths and wheelwrights were employed to make ready the wagons that were to transport the "Saints" and their belongings to the land of promise, and here, during the summer and autumn of 1846, the Nauvoo refugees rallied. The late comers, those who because of illness or inability to provide means for the journey had delayed their departure till September, suffered severely. Overtaken by winter storms and scantily supplied with food and clothing, they

encountered every hardship. Exposure and the malaria-haunted country through which they were marching bred disease. The names given to their halting places, Poor Camp and Misery Bottom, attested their wretched plight. Had not food and fresh oxen been sent to their aid from Winter Quarters, the women and children, the sick and aged must have perished. Under the efficient direction of the apostles, the combined resources of the church were brought to bear in this *trek* of a devoted people, and every individual gave ungrudgingly time, strength, and skill to the task of making provision for the needy. By intelligent coöperation fifteen thousand human beings with three thousand wagons, thirty thousand cattle, large flocks of sheep, and all manner of tools, machinery, and materials deemed serviceable in the colonization of a wilderness were conveyed across the four hundred miles between Nauvoo and Council Bluffs in the short space of six months.[2]

It was a great achievement, but only the beginning of the task the Mormon leaders had set themselves. Brigham Young, the successor of Joseph Smith in the presidency, had determined to place his flock beyond the mountains that formed the western limit of the Louisiana Purchase, out of reach of persecution. Little was then known of the vast basin or series of basins lying between the continental divide and the Sierra Nevada, except that the region was arid, treeless, and comparatively destitute of animal life. It was indicated on contemporary maps as the Great American Desert.

KANESVILLE, IOWA, AS WINTER QUARTERS.

Trappers had followed the mountain streams and practically exterminated the beaver, Ashley had held his rendezvous at Salt Lake, and Jedidiah Smith had made this desolate spot his headquarters. W. A. Walker had crossed (1833) the desert to the Sierras beyond, returning by way of Ogden River. Ten years later, the "pathfinder," under the guidance of Kit Carson, had explored the Great Salt Lake and reported his "discovery" to the government. Fremont's brilliant *Journal* was printed in 1845 and may have fallen into the hands of the Mormon leader; but in any case, the route to South Pass and the wonderful possibilities of Upper California were well known, so that migration to that region could not be regarded as an enterprise requiring superhuman foresight. It was the part of a judicious Moses, however, to go in advance of his people and spy out the land.

Early in April of 1847, President Young, with a company of one hundred and forty picked men, set out to discover the promised Zion. Seventy-three ox carts were loaded with food for the march and with farm implements, seeds, and carpenters' tools for the preparation of quarters for the later migration. The south bank of the Platte was the usual route of the Oregonians, but Young followed the north bank. It was higher and more wholesome and offered better pasturage and fewer Indians than the beaten trail, and the Mormons were desirous, moreover, to avoid coming into conflict with Missourians and other troublesome emigrants. Their order of march was like that of disciplined troops.

Every man walked with his gun loaded and powder-horn ready, the wagons were kept well together, and an advance-guard determined the most practicable road and looked out for buffalo and marauding Indians. The night encampment was a model of its kind. The wagons were drawn into a semi-circle, with diameter on the river, in such fashion that the tongues formed an awkward barricade and the fore-wheel of each wagon, interlocking with the hind wheel of the wagon in front of it, completed a substantial corral. Within this enclosure the cattle were confined, while the tents were placed outside. The night watch was intrusted to experienced men only.

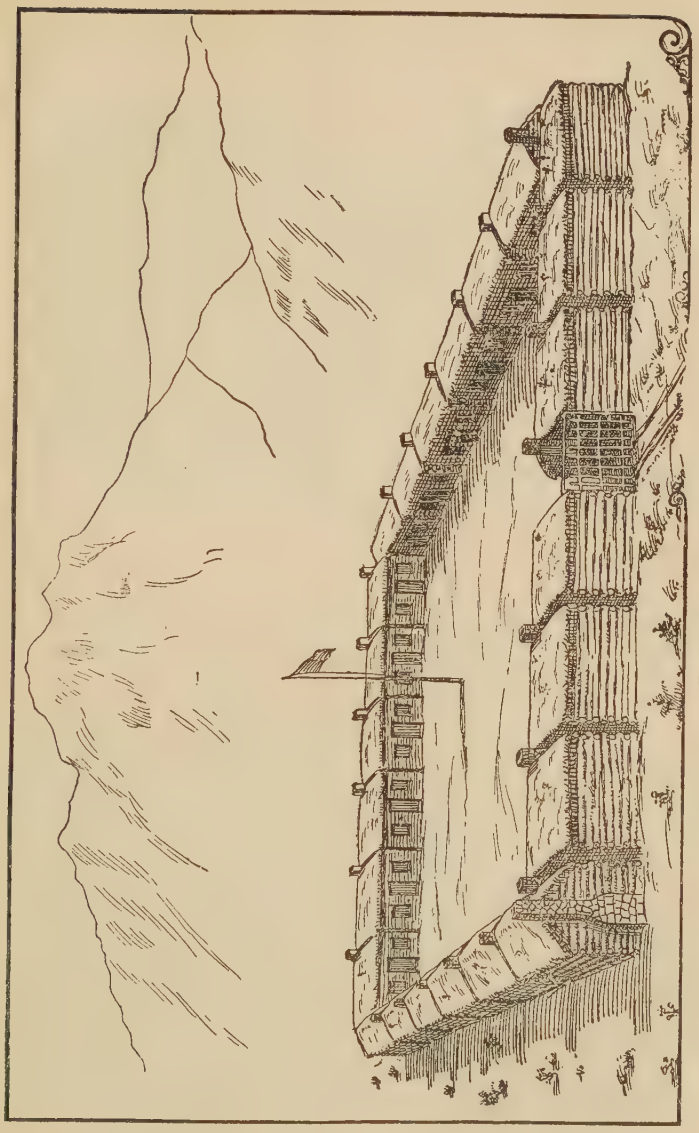
Early in June the little army reached Fort Laramie, the former trading post at the foot of the Black Hills, and here they halted to build rafts for the crossing of the North Platte and to dry meat for the mountain journey. Here, too, they secured a considerable addition to their scanty stock of food as compensation for the service rendered a party destined for Oregon, who were glad to make use of the impromptu ferry. At Fort Laramie, Young left a detachment of nine men to maintain the ferry as a means of obtaining money and supplies from the Oregonians and for the use of the Mormon emigrants when they should arrive. Once over South Pass and on westward-flowing water, the "pioneers" turned south from the Oregon Trail and, following down the Big Sandy, came to the Green River, over which they rafted the wagons. Black's Fork led them to Fort Bridger, which Orson Pratt describes as "two ad-

First View of Great Salt Lake from the Pass.

joining log houses, with dirt roofs, and a small picket yard of logs set in the ground, about eight feet high. The number of men, squaws and half-breed children in these houses and [the surrounding] lodges may be about fifty or sixty." Colonel Bridger gave a most discouraging account of the agricultural possibilities of the Cordilleran area. The "whole region was sandy and destitute of timber and vegetation except the sage brush." He knew exceptions, such as Bear Valley, Cache Valley, and the Willamette, but these fertile oases were preëmpted either by white men or Indians. There was a "good country" south of Utah Lake where the Indians were producing "as good corn and wheat and pumpkins as was ever raised in old Kentucky," and twenty days' march farther south the aborigines grew any quantity of the "very best wheat";[3] but he was ready to offer $1000 for the first ear of corn grown in the Great Basin. Concluding that they would not turn back until they had seen the country for themselves, the "pioneers" pushed on, directly west, and found their way, with considerable difficulty, to Echo Cañon and across the range to Emigration Cañon,—a narrow defile that opens on to the *mesa* overlooking Salt Lake Valley. Two small rivers flowing down from the Wasatch Range made this seem a promising location, and here within two hours of their arrival (July 23) the advance-guard began to plough for a belated planting. The baked earth was hard as iron, and several of the shares were broken in the attempt to turn a furrow. To soften the soil, they dammed the creek and directed the flow over the land. The device worked

satisfactorily and was used there after, not only to soften the soil, but to moisten the seed. The damming of City Creek marked the beginning of irrigation in the Great Basin. Pueblo Indians and their Spanish successors had practised irrigation in New Mexico, after inherited methods; but that Yankee farmers and English artisans should have hit upon the process with their first planting argues a high degree of ingenuity. During the month of August, some eighty acres were planted to corn and potatoes. The wheat crop was a failure because planted too late to ripen, but enough potatoes were gathered to furnish seed for the coming year. Shelter was quite as important as food, and men were sent to bring down timber from the mountains for the construction of a fort.[4] A pit-saw was soon erected, and some thirty houses were built of logs and adobe in four blocks so as to form a hollow square ten acres in extent. The outside walls were perforated with loopholes only, and all doors and windows opened on the court, after the fashion of a palisaded fort in frontier Kentucky.

On the seventeenth of August, less than a month after the arrival of the "pioneers," a company of seventy men was sent back to meet the main body of the refugees and escort them over the mountains. The "first emigration" comprised 1553 men, women, and children. Their live stock consisted of 2213 cattle, 124 horses, 887 cows, 358 sheep, with a few hogs and chickens. This great train with its 566 prairie schooners set out from Elkhorn River on the fourth of July and arrived at Salt Lake on the twenty-seventh of September in good health and without serious mishap.



Log Fort, Springville.

Once in the valley, the way-worn emigrants encountered a staggering disappointment. The prospect as they descended Emigration Cañon was beautiful as scenery, but it did not promise much in the way of sustenance. The plain was a waste of sage-brush, over which floated a heat mirage distorting distant objects. The ground was white with alkali and infested with black crickets, lizards, and rattlesnakes. Only along the creeks flowing down from the mountains was there any green, and here grew nothing but cottonwood, willow, and scrub-oak. Trees suitable for building — ash, maple, fir, and pine — were back in the cañons, eight or ten miles distant from the site of the city, and the only pasturage was the bunch grass that covered the *mesa*. Return was unthinkable, however, and the Saints resolutely set to work, determined to force the desert to yield them a living. Those who had arrived too late to secure cabins, dug caves in the dry earth or placed the covered wagon beds upon the ground and used them for shelter. The rainy season was cold and uncomfortable, but it reassured them as to the chances of agriculture.

The city was soon laid out in wide streets and house lots of an acre and a quarter each. Five-acre lots were surveyed in the suburbs as garden plots for the mechanics. Beyond were the farm lots of ten, forty, and eighty acres, increasing with distance from the population center. After the initial year of common cultivation, these lands were assigned to all comers as equitably as might be, each man drawing for his portion of the general inheritance. To

Emigration Cañon.

The Wasatch Range, above Provo.

the leaders who had plural wives and large families, a proportionate holding was awarded. Ten-acre lots were reserved for the temple and for public parks. As the Danes "roped out" their arable lands in conquered Anglia, so these conquerors of the desert divided to each man his portion. Claims were based on need and use. Brigham Young is reported as saying "that no man should buy land who came here; that he had none to sell; but every man should have his land measured out to him for city and farming purposes. He might till it as he pleased, but he must be industrious and take care of it." [5] In the First General Epistle issued in the autumn of 1849, the president stated: "A field of eight thousand acres has been surveyed south of and bordering on the city. The five and ten acre lots are distributed to the brethren by casting lots, and every man is to build a pole, ditch, or stone fence as shall be most convenient, around the whole field in proportion to the land he draws; also a canal on the east side for the purpose of irrigation." A quite similar apportionment of land and labor was customary in colonial New England. The common fence and the common ditch and the common pasture (to which the cows were driven by a common herder) were not the effect of Owenism or Fourierism or any of the contemporary communistic theories, but the dictates of common-sense and brotherly coöperation.

The same union of effort was evidenced in the setting up of a pit-saw and the building of the first saw- and grist-mills. The water-power of the mountain streams was rapidly utilized, and sixteen sawmills

and eleven grist-mills were completed by the spring of 1850.[6] Irrigating canals, mill-dams, roads, and bridges would have been impossible without such coöperation. The so-called "public works" were accomplished by labor furnished as equivalent for the tithes due from all church members and offered by assisted emigrants in return for transportation. So were built on Temple Block the first shops for carpenters, blacksmiths, and machinists. Here, and by contributed labor, was forged and cast the machinery used in the flour and lumber mills, also carding machines, fanning mills and farm tools,—the iron being taken from the hubs and tires of discarded wagons. Later, when produce and even money began to be brought to the tithing office, laborers were hired and paid in food and clothing, and many a successful business man was helped to his start in life by employment on the public works. The directing genius of all these enterprises was Brigham Young. Never had a great colonizer so free a hand. His word was law, and his requisitions were complied with in Scripture measure. Not even the founder of Pennsylvania had more definite plans for his ideal city or was more autocratic in determining the business undertakings of the people who came to the New World under his auspices.

In March of 1848 the population of Salt Lake City was 1671; 423 houses had been put up, and there were 5000 acres under cultivation (500 being planted to wheat); the outlook for the future was full of promise. Then befell a staggering calamity. A "plague of locusts" overspread the land and threat-

Salt Lake City in 1849.
Looking east.

Salt Lake City in 1853.
Looking south.

ened to destroy the crops. The people combated their advance with every conceivable device, but it was a losing fight. They had given up the struggle in despair, when lo ! a great flock of gulls came up from the lake and gorged themselves upon the enemy. To the half-starved Saints this seemed a miracle, but it was fortunately a miracle that happened every year. The remnant of the crops was saved, though barely enough to carry the "pioneers" and the summer's accession of three thousand emigrants through the next winter. This was the Mormons' "starving time." Frost and snow were exceptionally severe that year, and fuel was scarce. The stock of flour ran so low that from February to July the ration was three-quarters of a pound per head per day. Many families were reduced to digging the roots of the sego lily for food, and a rawhide broth was made from old buffalo robes. Word was sent to Winter Quarters that no emigrants should be forwarded the coming season who were not fully self-sustaining, and that these must bring several months' supply of bread-stuffs.

Even so, the colony might have perished but for a quite unforeseen event; viz., the discovery of gold in the Sacramento Valley. The first gold-seekers arrived at Salt Lake in August, 1849, and the Mormon settlement soon became the halfway station on the overland route to California and an important trading post. In their wild race to be first in the field, the "forty-niners" were ready to make any sacrifice. Fresh horses and mules were purchased at ten times their eastern value, while the jaded animals of the pack

trains, often of excellent breed, were abandoned or sold for a song. Flour brought $25 per hundredweight, and the labor of skilled mechanics — blacksmiths and wheelwrights — rose to $3 a day. On the other hand, "States goods," unobtainable hitherto at any price, sold at New York rates, or even less. Merchants who had stocked up for the California trade, hearing that goods were being sent round the Horn, were glad to dispose of their merchandise in this certain market. Money, thus far the scarcest of commodities, began to circulate. The awkward produce payments and the promissory notes issued by the apostles were no longer necessary. A transportation enterprise was organized under the auspices of the church, the Great Salt Lake Valley Carrying Company, for the conveyance of passengers and freight from the Missouri River to the Pacific Coast, and proved very profitable. The rate for passengers was $300 each and for goods, $250 per ton.

President Young did not intend his people to become dependent on the outside world. The difficulty of maintaining a colony divided from any market by one thousand miles of wagon trail was far greater than on the seaboard within reach of supply ships, and from the start the Mormons understood that they must be self-sustaining. Cloth and blankets were woven on hand-looms, the wool being carded and spun by the thrifty housewives. Not only shoes and boots, but clothes, were made of deer and elk skins. The brine of the lake yielded from one-third to one-fourth its weight in salt, and this necessity of life was hauled by the wagon-load from works set up on the shore.

A supply was even sent back to Winter Quarters. The soda springs a few miles to the north were made to serve another prime need. Sugar was not a product of the desert, but Old World experience suggested that saccharine might be obtained from corn or from beets. A crushing mill was built from the funds of the church in 1855, the machinery being welded out of scrap iron. Under the same benign auspices, a tannery, a pottery, a woollen mill, and a nail factory were soon in operation, and a railroad was built up the cañon to bring stone from a distant quarry. Bishops were accustomed to instruct their flocks in the economical administration of their farms and to read in public a list of those who were to be commended for superior husbandry, fencing and other improvements, — also a black list of the "idle, slothful and unimproving portion of the community, who were held up to reprobation, and threatened, in default of certain tasks allotted them being finished at the next visit, to be deprived of their lots and expelled the community." [7]

An agricultural society was established for the purpose of instructing the new-comers in the methods of irrigation, making experiments in fruits and vegetables, and offering prizes to the most successful farmers. The territorial assembly (1855) offered prizes for the largest crop of flaxseed, hemp, flower seed, etc., grown on a half acre of ground, and a reward of $1000 was offered (1854) to the discoverer of a bed of merchantable coal within feasible reach of Salt Lake City. Rewards were proposed, also, for the manufacture of rifle powder from materials found in the

territory,—$100 for the first hundred pounds, $100 for the second, $50 for the third, and so on till two thousand pounds should be put upon the market. Moreover, capital was encouraged to invest in the region by liberal terms of incorporation. The Deseret Iron Company was chartered in 1853 in the hope of developing the mineral resources of the Escallante Valley, and the church and the territorial government took $10,000 worth of stock. The Provo Manufacturing Company was authorized (1853) to raise a capital of $1,000,000 and to employ it "in such manufactures as they shall deem best * * * and for the erection and maintenance of such machinery, dams, buildings, races, watercourses, bridges, roads, etc.," as might serve their purpose.

Labor adequate to all these enterprises was insured by a steady stream of immigrants. The Perpetual Emigration Fund was organized (1849) for the purpose of assisting needy Saints to reach the city of their hopes. The sum of $5000 was raised at Salt Lake in 1849, and $35,000 was collected abroad in the next five years. The expenses of transportation were reduced to a minimum, and the recipient of aid was expected to restore the sum to the treasury as soon as possible, in order that others of the world's poor might enjoy a like benefit.[8]

In 1855 disaster again befell the infant colony. Grasshoppers swarmed the fields and threatened to be as destructive as the "crickets" had been. The following winter was unusually severe. The poorer families were reduced to rations of roots and rawhide, and great was the suffering in the frail wagon

"Gathering to Zion." Life by the Way.

The Handcart Emigrants in a Storm.

tents. The Emigration Fund was by this time so depleted that a cheaper method of transportation was proposed. The emigrants were to cross the Plains on foot, pushing their belongings in hand-carts, and the charge for the journey from Liverpool to Salt Lake on these terms was reduced from £15 to £9 with half rates for infants in arms. In the summer of 1856, thirteen hundred people were sent over the Mormon Trail in five different companies, — the so-called "hand-cart brigades." To each hundred were allotted five tents, twenty hand-carts, and one wagon drawn by three yoke of oxen. Tents and general supplies were stowed in the wagon, but each family carried its own rations and its quota of the sick and helpless in the hand-cart, while women and children, from the toddlers to the aged, walked the weary road (a three months' tramp) from Winter Quarters to the Valley. The first three companies suffered no more than the inevitable hardships, but the two last, delayed by the scarcity of carts until mid-August, suffered terribly from hunger and drought, were overtaken by heavy snow-storms in the mountains, and the loss of life was great. The news of this disaster, together with discouraging reports concerning crops, etc., checked the emigration movement. It never again reached the proportions of 1855, and the hand-cart experiment was not repeated.

In the fifteen years between 1840 and 1854, twenty-two thousand Mormons took ship for America, three-fourths of this number after 1848. The bulk of these people came from Great Britain. At Liverpool, an authorized agent of the church chartered the ships

and sold the tickets, commissioning one or more elders to take charge of the emigrants *en route*. These were responsible for good order and cleanliness, and we have abundant testimony to the effect that the personnel of these companies was higher and their standards of health and conduct much better than on the ordinary passenger steamers.[9] If the port was New York or Philadelphia, the emigrants went over the Alleghanies to the Ohio River and thence by boat to St. Louis; but the more economical, and therefore the more usual, route was by way of New Orleans and the Mississippi and Missouri rivers to St. Louis or Keokuk, Independence or the Bluffs,—whatever point of departure for the overland journey might have been determined on. At each transfer was an agent who looked after the comfort of the emigrants and furnished them with the necessary supplies. For the journey across the Plains, a carrying company was organized which was ready to transport passengers and luggage as well as ordinary freight at reasonable charges. This did away with the necessity of buying oxen and wagons at these congested points, where the demand was always in excess of the supply. In this service and in the retailing of oxen, wagons, and food to inexperienced foreigners, there was abundant opportunity for maltreatment and speculation; but the representatives of the church seem, as a rule, to have performed their duties with commendable ability and uprightness. It was, taken all in all, the most successful example of regulated immigration in United States history.

The march of this motley multitude was managed by an organization suggestive of that under which the Angles and Saxons migrated to Britain. The people were divided and subdivided into hundreds and fifties and tens, the natural attachments of kinship and neighborhood being observed, and to each division was assigned a responsible captain. Each hundred was to provide itself with oxen, carts, and all needed supplies. For a party of ten, a wagon, two milch cows, and a tent was the standard requirement.[10] Each was to send forward pioneers to plant crops and build houses, each was to care for its proportion of "the poor, the widows, the fatherless, and the families of those who have gone into the army." [11] Military order was observed on the march and in the encampments, the several officers taking turns at guard duty about the improvised corral. On this plan were organized all the Mormon companies that crossed the Plains for the next thirty years, until the Union Pacific Railway was carried through to Ogden. Thorough discipline and mutual aid were the means by which one hundred thousand people, the majority of them women and children, were conducted over one thousand miles of desert and mountain with a minimum of loss in life and property.

The original source of this extraordinary migration was Nauvoo, but later accessions came from the Eastern and Southern states, from England, Wales, Scotland, and Scandinavia. The fourth and fifth decades of the nineteenth century proved an epoch of misery and unrest, when the poor of every land were seeking escape from political and industrial oppres-

sion, and no solution of their difficulties was too transcendental for credence. The wretched operatives of Manchester and Birmingham, workmen in the potteries of Staffordshire, miners of the Lancashire collieries, the struggling artisans of London, the landless peasants of Scotland, the superfluous population of Norway, caught eagerly at this opportunity to secure earthly prosperity and eternal salvation at one stroke. Thousands accepted the Mormon faith and prepared to migrate to the promised land with the vaguest notion of the chances and hardships involved. By far the greater number were farmers and mechanics of the better class who had the means to remove to the land of opportunity. A large proportion, according to official statistics of the British government, were skilled laborers who carried with them the tools needed to pursue their occupation. The amount of hold luggage brought to the dock by Mormon passengers was a common complaint of ships' captains, who avowed that the vessel lay an inch deeper in the water on this account. The migration agents were directed by the church authorities "to seek diligently in every branch [of their British church] for wise, skilful and ingenious mechanics, manufacturers, potters, etc." [12] The emigrants were advised to bring with them tools and machinery, or designs of machinery, textile and otherwise, that they might set up their several crafts in the Valley. From time to time President Young announced the industries most needed in the commonwealth beyond the Rockies, *e.g.* "We want a company of woollen manufacturers to come with

machinery, and take our wool from the sheep, and convert it into the best clothes, and the wool is ready. We want a company of cotton manufacturers, who will convert cotton into cloth and calico, etc., and we will raise the cotton before the machinery can be ready. We want a company of potters; we need them. The clay is ready and the dishes wanted. Send a company of each, if possible, next spring. Silk manufacturers and all others will follow in rapid succession. We want some men to start a furnace forthwith; the coal, iron and moulders are waiting. We have a printing press, and any who can take good printing and writing paper to the Valley will be blessing themselves and the Church." [13]

Under this systematic propaganda, emigrants were arriving at the rate of two and three thousand a year, and it was evident that the narrow strip of irrigable land between the *mesa* and the lake could not sustain the growing community. Steps were taken to enlarge the borders, and exploring parties were sent out to find new locations. Wherever soil and water supply were adequate for agriculture, where there was water-power suited for milling purposes or mineral resources to be developed, "stakes" were planted. Companies of colonists were organized under trusted leaders and equipped with provisions and the implements and materials necessary to the prosecution of their industrial mission. Weber Valley to the north and Utah Valley to the south held better promise for the farmer than the shores of Salt Lake, and here a series of settlements was made. Farther south in the arid San Pete Valley, mountain streams

were found sufficient to maintain Nephi, Juab, and Manti stakes along the Spanish Trail. Cedar City

STAKES PLANTED IN ZION, 1847–1877.

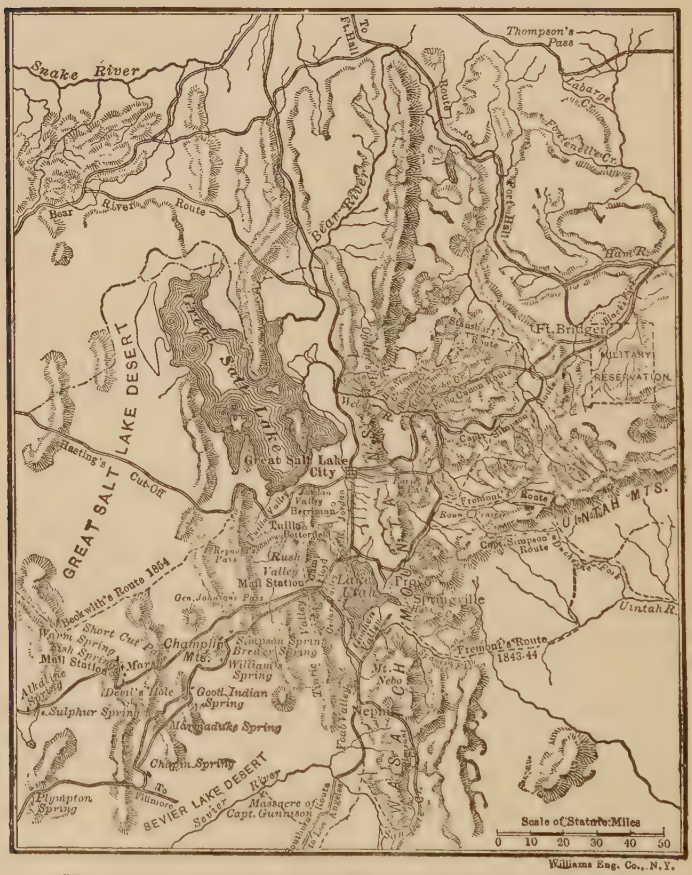
was founded, two hundred and seventy miles south of Salt Lake, for the working of the iron and coal deposits discovered there. A smelter was erected which produced a ton of metal per day, and five hundred acres were planted to wheat for the maintenance of the miners. In every case the site of the settlement and its leader were approved by President Young, and careful provision was made that adequate supplies of tools, seeds, and live stock were in the outfit and that each company included a sufficient number of artisans.

When in 1850 the State of Deseret became the Territory of Utah, there were eleven thousand people in the Valley, sixteen thousand acres of land were under cultivation, and the taxable property of the

colony amounted to $1,000,000. During the next six years, in spite of the grasshopper plague and other discouraging circumstances, the colony doubled these figures.

In the first days at Salt Lake, Brigham Young had said, "Now if they will let us alone for ten years, I'll ask no odds of them." [14] The tenth anniversary of the settlement brought the Mormon commonwealth to a trial of strength with the Federal authorities. Controversies with the "gold-seekers" over payment for supplies, claims to strayed cattle, damages for trespassing, etc., had embittered the relations between Mormon and Gentile.[15] The officials sent out from Washington were mere place-hunters, neither tactful nor wise nor, in all cases, upright, but the scandal of polygamy had shocked the moral sense of the nation. Representations forwarded to President Buchanan to the effect that United States authority was defied by the Mormons, induced him to order troops to Utah for the purpose of overawing the malcontents and inaugurating the first Gentile administration in the person of Governor Cummings. Six thousand troops were detailed for this service, and the commissariat exceeded in quantity and cost any that had ever been sent into the West. Two thousand beef cattle, as many horses and mules, and a long train of wagons were provided, with a view to an indefinite sojourn in the wilderness. The fraud and peculation practised on the government by the purveyors gave to this expedition the nickname, "the contractors' war." No negotiations had preceded this extraordinary military demonstration, and the

Saints were quite in the dark as to its mission; but the people were as one man in their determination to resist armed invasion. The Mormon militia numbered only one thousand insufficiently armed men,



WAGON ROUTES ACROSS THE WASATCH RANGE, 1858–1859.

but defence of their mountain stronghold was not difficult. A force was deputed to barricade Echo Cañon, a narrow defile with precipitous walls several

hundred feet in height and the only direct access to the Valley from the east, and another was sent forward to intercept the provision trains and otherwise embarrass the advancing army. Lot Smith and his men succeeded in burning two wagon trains and in cutting out hundreds of oxen which were driven off to the Valley, while they fired the plains in the path of the troops and destroyed Fort Bridger, the first objective point.[16] So ingeniously did the Mormons make their country and climate fight for them, that General Johnson, seeing his army deprived of food and shelter and means of transportation (for the starved animals were dying by hundreds) and overtaken by furious snow-storms, was forced to abandon hope of reaching Salt Lake before spring. He made the best of a desperate situation by establishing winter quarters on Black Fork, one hundred and fifteen miles from Salt Lake City.

Meantime Governor Cummings had been induced to visit the city and treat with the Mormon officials, and a truce was agreed upon. The army was to enter the Valley, but on the understanding that private property was not to be molested and that the encampment was to be forty miles distant from any Mormon settlement.

When, however, General Johnson and Governor Cummings rode into Salt Lake City at the head of the United States troops, they found the place deserted. The inhabitants had moved to the south, to the settlements in Utah Valley and beyond, leaving only a few watchmen who were under orders to set fire to the houses, workshops, and granaries in case any hostile demonstration was made by the much

distrusted commander. Evidently Brigham Young and his people were prepared for another *trek* into the wilderness rather than submit to military rule. Not until the army was encamped in Cedar Valley (Camp Floyd) did the devoted Saints return to their homes. In the end, the presence of the army proved a material blessing, since the demand for grain, cattle, and labor was enormously increased. During the two years of its sojourn in Utah, the Mormon farmers enjoyed a good market at high prices, and many an impoverished emigrant got work at the Fort at wages hitherto unknown in the Valley. When at the outbreak of the Civil War, the troops were withdrawn, great quantities of military supplies were sold for a song or abandoned. Goods valued at $4,000,000 were sold for $100,000.

Because of their peculiar social and industrial order, the Mormon settlements have been misrepresented to an extraordinary degree. Most of the first-hand authorities are either Mormon or anti-Mormon, and in neither case can the record be relied upon. The recounting of the simplest facts is likely to be colored by prejudice — even distorted beyond recognition. Fortunately for the impartial historian, however, the commonwealth was visited during the first ten years of its existence by several travellers whose fair-mindedness and powers of observation can hardly be called in question. A summary of their conclusions seems essential to an unbiased estimate of the economic results of the Mormon migration.

A "forty-niner" described Salt Lake City thus:

"The houses are small, principally of brick, built up only as temporary abodes, until the more urgent and important matter of enclosure and cultivation are attended to; but I never saw anything to surpass the ingenuity of arrangement with which they are fitted up, and the scrupulous cleanliness with which they are kept. There were tradesmen and artisans of all descriptions, but no regular stores, or workshops, except forges. Still, from the shoeing of a wagon to the mending of a watch, there was no difficulty experienced in getting it done, as cheap and as well put out of hand as in any other city in America. Notwithstanding the oppressive temperature, they were all hard at work at their trades, and abroad in the fields weeding, moulding, and irrigating; and it certainly speaks volumes for their energy and industry, to see the quantity of land they have fenced in, and the breadth under cultivation. . . . There was ample promise of an abundant harvest, in magnificent crops of wheat, maize, potatoes, and every description of garden vegetable, all of which require irrigation, as there is little or no rain in this region, a Salt Lake shower being estimated at a drop to each inhabitant. They have numerous herds of the finest cattle, droves of excellent sheep, with horses and mules enough and to spare, but very few pigs, persons having them being obliged to keep them chained, as the fences are not close enough to prevent them damaging the crops. However, they have legions of superior poultry, so that they live in the most plentiful manner possible. We exchanged and purchased

some mules and horses on very favorable terms, knowing we would stand in need of strong teams in crossing the Sierra Nevada." [17]

Captain Howard Stansbury of the United States Topographical Survey was sent to Utah in 1849 to explore Salt Lake and its immediate environs. It was a difficult task because of the desolate character of the "Great Briny Shallow," whose periphery of mud flats, twenty miles back from the shores, afforded neither wood nor water nor game sufficient to maintain an exploring expedition. Success depended upon the interested coöperation of the white settlers of the valley. The first Mormons were encountered at Brown's settlement on the Weber, "an extensive assemblage of log buildings, picketed, stockaded, and surrounded by out-buildings and cattle yards, the whole affording evidence of comfort and abundance far greater than I had expected to see in so new a settlement." [18] Here the party met with a surly reception and were even refused food and shelter. The unexpected rebuff was later explained by the fact that Brown doubted if the United States government would recognize the validity of his Spanish title and lived in dread of the appearance of land office agents. When Stansbury had opportunity to state the purpose of his expedition to Brigham Young, he was assured of all the aid the struggling community was able to give. Stansbury's was the first party of white men to make the circuit of the lake by land, and he attributed this achievement in good part to the help and comfort freely rendered him by the Mor-

mons. The winter of 1849–1850 was spent in the city of the Saints, and his relations with the officials were such as to give him abundant opportunity to observe the unique economy of the new Zion. Houses were scarce, and many of the people were still living in wagon beds; but food was abundant, and considerable enterprises such as mills and bridges and toll roads were well under way. Stansbury credits the Mormon brethren with a high standard of commercial morality, stating that in no instance had fraud or extortion been practised upon his party. Prices for farm produce were moderate and quality good. The not infrequent difficulties between the settlers and the gold-seekers were generally, in his opinion, occasioned by disregard of property rights and of municipal regulations on the part of the lawless element in the emigrant trains. The offenders who were arrested and fined, or even, in default of payment, forced to labor in the public works by the church authorities, vigorously protested this alien jurisdiction. Brigham Young, Stansbury describes as a man of keen good sense, fully alive to the responsibilities of his station and indefatigable in devising ways and means for the moral, mental, and physical uplifting of his people. The almost universal prosperity of this farming community, only two years remove from the sage-brush, Stansbury attributed to (1) the high degree of industry and intelligence observable in the settlers, precisely the most vigorous and enterprising of the denizens of the British Isles, (2) the prudence and sagacity of the leaders whose arrange-

ments for the journey to Salt Lake City and for the industrial welfare of its people were most business-like, (3) the discipline of the rank and file who rendered implicit obedience to their ecclesiastical superiors, (4) the spirit of coöperation, — of individual contribution to the common good, which was the fundamental principle of this extraordinary society. Every man paid tithes of produce and of labor to the church officials, in addition to the taxes levied by the civil government. Notwithstanding this double burden, every one was prosperous. There were literally no paupers. A proposal to establish a poorhouse had been abandoned because of the evident lack of patronage. Some part of this happy exemption was due to the systematic aid given by the church to newly arrived emigrants, some part, no doubt, to the fact that intoxicating liquors were scarce and dear. Whiskey retailed at $8 per gallon and brandy at $12, because of the heavy duty (fifty per cent) on the imported article.

On his return trip through Echo Cañon Stansbury met a Mormon caravan of ninety-five wagons, each furnished with from three to five yoke of oxen, all in fine condition. "The wagons swarmed with women and children," and poultry coops were swung on behind. "I estimated the train at one thousand head of cattle, one hundred head of sheep, and five hundred human souls." [19] A little later, on the upper Platte (September, 1850), Stansbury reports "crowds of emigrant-wagons, wending their way to the Mormon Valley, with droves of cattle and sheep, whose fat and thriving condition, after so long a

journey, was the subject of general remark, and excited universal admiration." [20]

To Lieutenant Gunnison, his very efficient second in command, Stansbury deputed the study of the religious and social features of the Mormon state, and to his treatise, *The Mormons or Latter Day Saints in the Valley of the Great Salt Lake*,[21] the reader is referred as a conscientious endeavor to see and tell the exact truth in regard to many controverted points. Gunnison advised the let-alone policy (the policy later urged by Abraham Lincoln) as the method by which the infant commonwealth would most surely slough off its errors of faith and practice. He believed that the strength of the theocracy was enhanced by persecution. With peace, prosperity, and education, its power would inevitably disintegrate.

Five years after the Stansbury party left the State of Deseret, the Valley was visited by Jules Remy, a French naturalist, who, being something of a philosopher as well, ventured the voyage from Honolulu and the journey across the desert for the sake of observing with his own eyes this extraordinary development of religious fanaticism. To the Frenchman, "Joseph Smith was a cheat and an impostor" and "Mormonism was the coarsest form of Mysticism"; but he was forced to concede the extraordinary success of this new industrial order. Here was a community of sixty thousand people representing fifteen different nationalities — Britons, Canadians, Americans, Scandinavians, Germans — by no means the most temperate or least quarrel-

some of races; but Remy was struck with the "order, the tranquillity and industry" of the inhabitants and the cleanliness and comfort of their dwellings.[22] "Neither grog shops, gaming-houses, nor brothels are to be met with." While the Mormons did not abstain from the temperate use of liquors (whiskey distilled from wheat or potatoes, and beer brewed from the hops grown in the Valley), there was no drunkenness. He was struck, too, with the marvellous activity of the seven-year-old city, not only in the Temple Block, where "emigrants who have newly arrived, as well as residents who are without employment apply for work," but in the outlying wards. "The whole of this small nation occupy themselves as usefully as the working bees of a hive. . . . The idle or unemployed are not to be met with here." [23] The extraordinary material achievements of the modern Zion were, to his mind, not the result of communism, but of patriotism. Each man put forth his utmost effort under the threefold necessity of preserving alive himself, his family, and the commonwealth.

Brigham Young, Remy thought a coarse, uneducated man, but a leader of remarkable shrewdness and force. His ability was acknowledged even by those Gentiles who denounced Mormonism as a poisonous gangrene. The Gentiles, of whom there were not more than one hundred in the city, were not the best element of the population. They were merchants, physicians, and Federal officers, all superfluous vocations from the Mormon point of view, and a motley collection of vagabonds, "coming no

one knew whence, living no one knew how, mostly at the expense of travellers and the Mormons themselves." [24] The Saints were not infrequently charged with the crimes committed by these lawless characters, and while Remy recognized, as did his Mormon informants, that there were many ne'er-do-weels clinging to the skirts of the mountain state, he came to the conclusion that the rank and file were "industrious, honest, sober, pious, and . . . even chaste in their polygamic relations." [25]

It is interesting to put alongside this French estimate of the Mormon commonwealth the observations of two English travellers who perhaps better understood a people in whom the Teutonic blood so largely dominated. William Chandless, though a man of education and substance, crossed the Plains with a cattle train, serving as an ordinary teamster, in the summer of 1855. He had frequent opportunity to observe the admirable order of the Mormon caravans, and attributed this to the devotion of their leaders. The drivers of ordinary teams were paid more than the Mormons in the ratio of five to three, but they were a far inferior type of men. "It was a pretty sight to watch them [a Mormon caravan] starting off for the day's march; great numbers of women and children walking in advance gaily, the little ones picking flowers, the boys looking for grapes or plums if there were trees near, and the mothers knitting as they went; all seemed willing to endure hardship, looking upon the journey as a pilgrimage to the promised land, where they should have rest." [26] After three months' experience of all types of plains-

men, Chandless came to the conclusion that the Mormons were as good Christians as the others. As a whole, they were a "good plain, honest sort of people, simple-minded, but not fools, nor yet altogether uneducated; an omnium gatherum from half-a-dozen nations, containing many excellent artisans and some tradespeople, along with a large number of mere laborers and some few men of talent and cultivation." [27] Chandless thought Salt Lake Valley not a promising site for a colony, but unexcelled as a refuge from persecution. The settlers were thrifty and industrious and had apparently made the best of their scanty opportunities. Marvels had been accomplished in spite of the scarcity of fuel and raw materials and the double burden of tithes and taxes.

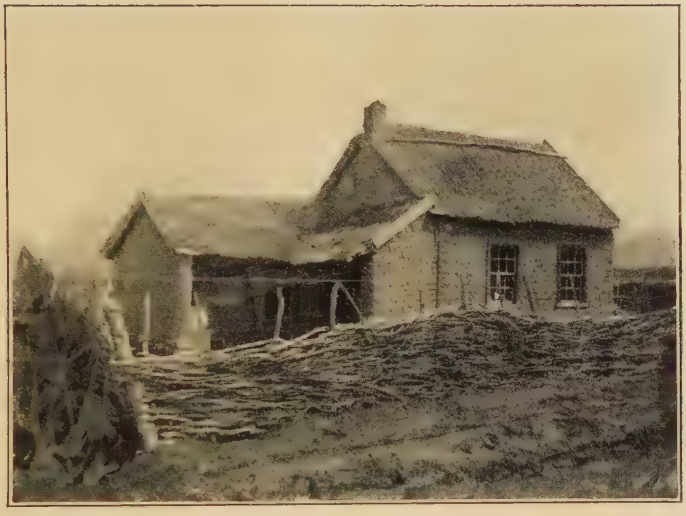
Richard F. Burton, a world traveller, made the journey from St. Joseph to Salt Lake more luxuriously in the mail coach (1859); but he saw, none the less, much of the Mormon emigrants. He, too, noted the excellent discipline of their camps, and thought that their equipment did credit to the Perpetual Emigration Fund's travelling arrangements. The hand-cart brigade was a thing of the past. Many of this year's emigrants had purchased their own outfits at a cost of $500 per family. In the earlier stages of the route there was no hardship; but once in the mountains, the lack of food and water began to exhaust the strength of the feebler members of the party. On Ham's Fork, Burton's record is: "We had now fallen into the regular track of Mormon emigration, and saw the wayfarers in their worst

plight, near the end of the journey. We passed several families, and parties of women and children trudging wearily along; most of the children were in rags or half nude, and all showed gratitude when we threw them provisions." [28] Once in the Valley and under the care of their co-religionists, the emigrants had every prospect of success. "Morally and spiritually, as well as physically, the *protegés* of the Perpetual Emigration Fund gain by being transferred to the Far West. Mormonism is emphatically the faith of the poor, and those acquainted with the wretched condition of the English mechanic, collier, and agricultural laborer . . . who, after a life of ignoble drudgery, . . . are ever threatened with the work house, must be of the same opinion. Physically speaking, there is no comparison between the conditions of the Saints and the class from which they are mostly taken. In point of mere morality, the Mormon community is perhaps purer than any other of equal numbers." "Furthermore, the Mormon settlement was a vast improvement upon its contemporaries in the valleys of the Mississippi and the Missouri." [29]

Traces of the Utah War were still evident in the breastworks and barricades along Echo Cañon and in the general uneasiness of the people. Governor Cummings seemed to Burton a man of ability and uprightness, a finer type of man than had been previously sent out by the Federal government; but he had the peacemaker's ungrateful task. "The scrupulous and conscientious impartiality which he has brought to the discharge of his difficult and

delicate duties, and, more still, his resolution to treat the Saints like Gentiles and citizens, not as Digger Indians or felons, have won him scant favor from either party." [30] Brigham Young impressed him as rude and uncouth, but sincere. "Of his temperance and sobriety there is but one opinion. His life is ascetic." He was accustomed to lecture his people on their sins with a plainness of speech and an energy of invective that were Cromwellian. An extract from a sermon printed in the *Mormon Expositor* is cited: "That man that sells liquor and believes that he must, I will promise him damnation for it. That man that makes liquor and gives it to his neighbor, he shall have his reward in Hell."

Captain Simpson of the United States Topographical Survey, who passed through Salt Lake and Utah valleys in 1859 and 1860, reports on the character of the outlying settlements. The toll roads were excellent and the bridges adequate, but he thought the adobe villages with their decaying earthworks slovenly and thriftless. "The generality of the houses is far below in character what obtains among the poorest of our population in the States. The roofs are generally of mud, and give frequent evidences of tumbling in; and the doors and windows all indicate penury and an inattention to cleanliness." These villages "are all inhabited by farmers, who cultivate the land contiguous to the town, and the yards are filled with the implements of husbandry, stacks of wheat and hay; and in the evening, during harvest, there is to be seen a constant succession of wagons, filled with the produce



Adobe House with Thatched Roof and Wattled Fence.

A Mormon House at Provo, Utah.

of the field, and cattle driven in for security. The inhabitants send out their cattle in herds to pasture, the herdsman passing in the morning from one end of the town to the other, and as he does so, sounding his horn as a signal for the owners to turn their stock into the general herd. The charge is about two cents per animal per day." [31] The Mormons were planting colonies in the remote mountain valleys where rich meadowland furnished excellent pasturage and hay for winter feed. In Round Prairie at the head of Provo Cañon, a little settlement of ten families sprang up between Captain Simpson's first and second traverse of the mountains. Garland Hurt, Indian agent for the Territory, furnished Simpson with a table of "Population and Industries" from which it appears that there were at that time in Utah twenty-eight "stakes" and a population of forty-two thousand eight hundred. Salt Lake City was estimated to have a population of eight thousand, Provo four thousand, Cedar City, Ogden, Springville, and Spanish Fork, two thousand each. The cultivated area (43,400 acres) was a little more than an acre per capita of the population, and the twenty-eight towns had built twenty-seven flour mills and eighteen sawmills.

The Mormons in California

The original destination of the Mormon hegira was quite indefinite. Somewhere beyond the mountains that bounded the territory of the United States, in the region described by the fur traders and latterly by Fremont, the explorer, there must

be a land where a new and free commonwealth could be built. California was already a name to conjure with, and especially Upper California,—a term then used to include everything north of Sonora and west of the Rockies. The Latter Day Saints were accustomed to sing:—

> "The Upper California, oh, that's the land for me,
> It lies between the mountains and the great Pacific Sea!"

So while Brigham Young was organizing the *trek* from Nauvoo, Samuel Brannan, the leader of the Saints in the East, was preparing to lead his flock to California by sea. In February, 1846, the *Brooklyn* sailed from New York with two hundred and thirty-five emigrants on board and an ample stock of farm implements, seeds, etc., and machinery for saw- and grist-mills. They had reason to believe that their prospects of success were better than those of the overland contingent, for it was understood that President Polk favored the enterprise as a means of Americanizing the coveted territory. On the outbreak of the Mexican War, the president called upon the Mormons on the Missouri to furnish a battalion. The call came at a time (August, 1846) when every able-bodied man was needed for the march across the Plains; but it was deemed all-important to give the government this proof of loyalty, and five hundred men were sent, without protest, to join General Kearney's command. The Mormon Battalion served under Colonel Cooke, who was deputed to open a wagon road from Santa Fé to the Pacific, and he paid a high tribute to the *morale* of the men. "Much

credit is due to the battalion for the cheerful and faithful manner in which they have accomplished the great labors of this march, and submitted to its exposures and privations,'' [32] and his words were reënforced by General Mason, who would have been glad to reënlist them. Once arrived in San Diego, however, finding the war at an end, the Saints were eager to rejoin their families. Each man received forty dollars in bounty and was allowed to retain his uniform and firearms. They found a ready market for labor in California, and thus when, in small parties and by different routes, they made their way back to the colony at Salt Lake, they were none the worse for their brief military experience, and had accumulated some welcome cash.[33]

Meantime, the *Brooklyn* was voyaging round the Horn and, at the end of six months, arrived in the harbor of San Francisco to find, to Brannan's amazement and dismay, the United States flag floating over Yerba Buena. Brannan speedily adjusted himself to the situation, apostatized, and entered into some profitable business enterprises. Others secured employment with Captain Sutter and were working on the mill-race at Coloma when the first gold was discovered there. Tradition has it that some of these men went back across the mountains to Salt Lake City, driving donkeys loaded with gold dust. Certain it is that the first coins authorized by the State of Deseret were struck from California gold, ninety-four thousand ounces of which were turned into the treasury of the church.

The gold fever was steadily discouraged by the

apostles at Salt Lake, for they feared it would demoralize the colony. Brigham Young said in his trenchant way, "If we were to go to San Francisco and dig up chunks of gold, it would ruin us," and he succeeded in persuading his people that there was more certain wealth in the sage-brush *mesas* of the Valley. The commercial opportunities afforded by the gold craze were, however, utilized to the full. Cattle were driven to the Coast, and the returning mule trains brought potatoes and grain and other needed supplies. A stake was planted at the eastern base of the Sierras (Genoa, Nevada) as a halfway station for the muleteers.

The agricultural possibilities of California were not ignored by the long-headed business men at the helm of this great colonizing enterprise. It was hoped that a less difficult route than the overland trail might be developed; viz. across the Isthmus of Panama, by ship to San Diego, and thence *via* Las Vegas and the Sevier River to Salt and Utah lakes. A large emigration with one hundred and fifty wagons was sent over the Spanish Trail to found the settlement of San Bernardino just below Cajon Pass, and the towns of Provo, Springville, Paysan, and Manti were founded as depots of supplies. Laguna Beach was the receiving station at San Diego.

CHAPTER III

THE CONQUEST OF CALIFORNIA

SECTION I

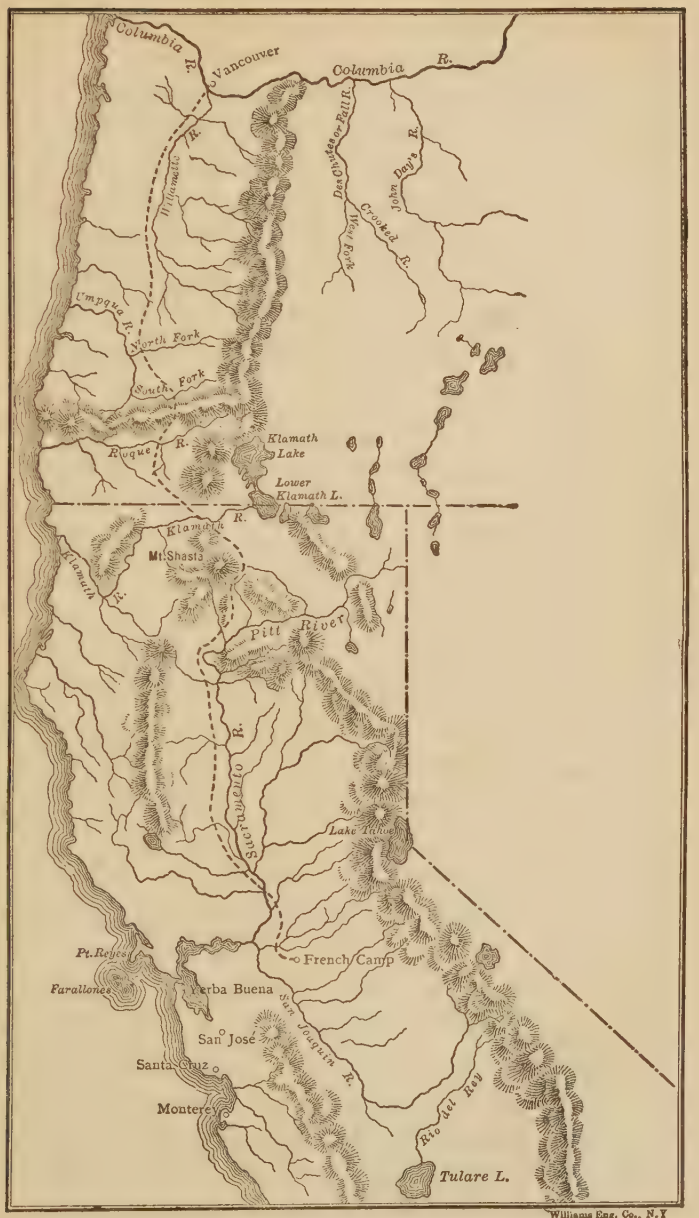
Traders and Trappers

ARGUELLO'S hospitality to trading vessels from Boston opened up trade relations between California and the United States and led to the domiciling of various American citizens in this outlying province of Mexico. The first American settlers were merchants, such as Gale and Cooper of Monterey, Abel Stearns of Los Angeles, W. G. Dana and Alfred Robinson of Santa Barbara, Nathan Spear, William H. Davis and Captain Hinckley of Yerba Buena. They readily ingratiated themselves with the Californians by becoming naturalized, adopting the Roman Catholic religion, and marrying *hijas del pais*. Their superior business ability soon secured them wealth and influence. Less known, but no less influential in the Americanization of California, were the sailors and mechanics who, year by year, deserted the whalers and the hide ships and found refuge with the hospitable natives. They had no difficulty in maintaining themselves in a country where skilled labor was so scarce.

Another current of American influence was furnished by the hunting parties that made their way over the Sierras to the beaver streams along their

western slopes. Tradition has it that, in 1822, Arguello sent an expedition up the Sacramento to the foothills of the Sierras to ascertain the truth of a report brought in by the Indians that a number of white men clad in leather and carrying long guns were in hiding there. Whatever the foundation of the rumor, his troopers failed to find the invaders. Four years later, Jedidiah Smith crossed the Mohave Desert to San Gabriel Mission and trapped the length of the San Joaquin Valley. Repeating the daring adventure in 1827, he was forced by the suspicious authorities of Monterey to leave the country. The luckless Patties crossed the Colorado Desert to San Diego in 1829, and were sentenced to solitary confinement for their pains. The son was offered five hundred cattle and as many horses, with land sufficient to maintain them, if he would settle in the country, become a Catholic and a Mexican citizen; but he indignantly refused and returned home to report the wealth and defencelessness of California. A little later W. A. Walker crossed the Great American Desert and the Sierras to Monterey, and, getting off without molestation, brought back an enthusiastic account of the chances for trader and trapper.

These daring experiments attracted imitators. Smith's heavy catch of furs revealed to Dr. McLoughlin the rich possibilities of the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys and opened the way for the exploitation of the district by the Hudson's Bay Company. In the autumn of 1828, McLeod was sent south along Smith's trail for that season's hunt. He



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trapped the mountain streams with excellent success and was returning to Fort Vancouver with pack-horses loaded with beaver and land-otter skins when he was caught in the ascent of Pitt River by an unexpected fall of snow and obliged to cache his furs and hurry on in order to save his men and animals. McLeod was severely censured for this misfortune, and the following year the California district was intrusted to McKay. He ventured even to the Bay of San Francisco and took four thousand beaver along its reedy shores; but the fur was inferior in quality to that of the mountain beaver and brought only $2 a pound. The next season, Peter Skeene Ogden was transferred to this field, and under his energetic management, the Great Valley was thoroughly explored and developed. For ten years (1829–1838), a Hudson's Bay Company brigade made its annual traverse, south in the autumn and north in the spring, between Fort Vancouver and French Camp, — the post on the San Joaquin. The cavalcade was a picturesque one, formed in Indian file and led by the chief trader. "Next him rode his wife, a native woman, astride — as is common with the females — upon her pony, quite picturesquely clad. . . . Next, the clerk and his wife, much in the same manner; and so on to the officers of less importance, and the men; and finally the boys, driving the pack horses, with bales of fur one hundred and eighty pounds to each animal. The trampling of the fast-walking horses, the silvery tinkling of the small bells, rich, handsome dresses, and fine appearance of the riders, whose number amounted to sixty or seventy"

made a really patriarchal array.[1] Smith's trace soon became a well-beaten road some five hundred and fifty miles in length, but since four-fifths of it ran along the levels of the Willamette and Sacramento valleys, the journey was usually made in thirty-one days.

American trappers were not slow to avail themselves of the new hunting grounds revealed by Smith, Pattie, and Walker, and year by year larger parties appeared in the Great Valley. They no longer attempted to pack their furs over the mountains, but sold them to traders at the coast ports, and the traffic grew to considerable proportions, — from $15,000 to $20,000 a year.[2] Every trapping party was required to have a license, and the fees brought in a tidy revenue, highly gratifying to the officials; but the interlopers were for the most part a vagabond crew — frontiersmen from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri — and their influence on the Indians was demoralizing. Some of the Americans found horses and mules a more profitable game than beaver, and they had the coöperation of the natives, who were only too ready to pay off old scores by stealing live stock from the missions or from the *rancheros*. Thus there gathered in the interior valleys, lawless companies of men who made no pretence of naturalization, practised no useful vocation, and cherished both hatred and contempt for the pusillanimous Spanish rule.

The long-sought route between California and Santa Fé was opened by Americans. In 1829 Ewing Young came across the mountains from Taos,

via Escallantes' trail and Walker's Pass, with a party of trappers — Mexican and Canadian — and found Ogden in the Tulares. Venturing to Los Angeles, he became involved in a drunken riot and was forced to flee the country. He carried back to New Mexico, however, such reports of the trade possibilities of California as greatly excited the merchants of Santa Fé. Young returned in 1830 in company with William Wolfskill and J. J. Warner, bringing trappers and hunters *via* Cajon Pass for the purpose of taking sea-otter along the coast and beaver in the interior. His license from the governor of New Mexico permitted him to take *nutria*, a word which properly means sea-otter, but which in Santa Fé was used colloquially for beaver. This license was received with some demur by the Californian authorities; but Young proceeded to San Pedro, where he built some boats with the aid of an American carpenter out of planking brought from Boston. The *padre* of San Gabriel gave the party passage on his schooner to the Santa Barbara Islands, and there Young conducted a very successful hunt, shooting the otter in the surf and laying in a large store of these valuable furs. The year following he moved his party to the Great Valley and trapped along the San Joaquin, thence to Sacramento, and thence across the Coast Range and north to the Umpqua River. Recrossing the mountains, he came down the Sacramento, trapping beaver all the way; but on reaching Monterey, his rich catch was confiscated by Figueroa, on the ground that his license did not include beaver. The

resourceful American then purchased horses from the missions, intending to sell them at Fort Vancouver. The difficulties there created by Figueroa's misrepresentations have already been related.

Meantime, convinced that farming in California was more profitable than hunting, Wolfskill and Warner got possession of land. The former planted the first commercial vineyard in the neighborhood of Los Angeles, while the latter secured a ten-league grant in the mountains back of San Diego and developed a famous cattle ranch. Some of the trappers had made their way back to Santa Fé and there reported that at Los Angeles they were able to trade their Navajo blankets for mules, at the rate of two *serapes* for one beast. The commercial opening was immediately seized upon by Jackson (of Smith, Sublette & Jackson), and he loaded a pack train with woollen cloth, blankets, and silver dollars, and set out for San Diego by the southern route (Santa Rita, Tucson, and the Pima villages, Rio Colorado, Temecula, and San Luis Rey). Jackson purchased six hundred mules and one hundred horses, of a larger and stronger breed than was grown in New Mexico; but the Santa Fé market was easily overstocked, and the sugar plantations of Louisiana, where they would have brought a better price, were too remote, so the returns on this venture were disappointing. Other traders followed up the opportunity, however, and the Santa Fé caravan soon became an annual event. The train set out in October in advance of the snowfall and, crossing the Mohave Desert in a south-

westerly direction, forded the Colorado at Bill Williams Creek, and so by the Cajon Pass to San Gabriel and Los Angeles. The traffic flourished for a decade[3] (1830–1840), and many of the merchants and muleteers, Mexicans and Americans, crossed with the annual caravan and, finding California much to their liking, elected to remain. Dr. John Marsh, who later founded a colony on the San Joaquin, Pope, who put up the first grist-mill in Los Angeles, and Alexander, who built the first tannery, came in by this route. A more or less perfunctory compliance with the established form of worship was sufficient to protect them from interference on the part of the authorities, and the people welcomed their ingenuity and business enterprise.

The region north of San Francisco Bay was untouched by the Spaniards, for they had stopped, where Anza had been checked, at Estrejo Carquines; but the foreigners were not appalled by running water. In the Petaluma and Napa valleys and beyond the *tule* marshes to the east of the Bay, a number of trappers had squatted, relying on the feebleness of the government for immunity from arrest, and had there collected droves of cattle and horses.

In the Great Valley beyond, the resort of wild horses and degenerate Indians, there were two foreign colonies that rivalled the mission establishments as centres of civilization. Dr. John Marsh was a New Englander and a Harvard graduate, who numbered among his friends Schoolcraft, the scientist, and Governor Cass. Dominated by that enthusiasm for the frontier which swayed so many of his contem-

poraries, Marsh tried his fortune at Detroit, Fort Snelling, Prairie du Chien, and St. Joseph in turn. At the last post he opened a general store and, after seven years' apprenticeship on the Missouri, joined a trading expedition *via* Santa Fé, Chihuahua, and Sonora to California. Here he determined to establish himself (1835) and, finding no difficulty in negotiating a land grant from the compliant Alvarado, he selected a tract near the confluence of the San Joaquin and Sacramento rivers, at the foot of Mt. Diablo. The soil was extraordinarily fertile and the means for irrigation at hand. Within a few years, Dr. Marsh's ranch showed orchards and vineyards and tilled fields, as well as a great herd of cattle. His business success together with his acumen and knowledge of the world gave him paramount influence with the American settlers.

Even more successful and commanding was John A. Sutter, a German Swiss, who, failing in business at home, came to America in pursuit of fortune. He had visited the Missouri frontier, the Columbia River settlements, the Russian posts, and the Sandwich Islands before fate brought him to San Francisco Bay. Much impressed by the resources of the region, he secured from Alvarado a floating grant of eleven square leagues (1839) and located it on American Fork, thinking this tributary less subject to inundation than the Sacramento. Purposing to found a colony of his countrymen, Sutter called the settlement New Helvetia; but this project proved unpractical, and he was fain to fulfil the terms of his contract by enlisting such American, English, and

German adventurers as were at hand. On the north bank of the Fork, three miles above its junction with the Sacramento, the *empressario* built an adobe fort and organized a considerable fighting force, for he had the governor's commission to defend the frontier against *gentiles* and horse thieves. His first business venture was in the fur trade, for beaver were still abundant up the Fork; but he soon had opportunity to buy at a bargain agricultural implements, seeds, plants, and draft animals from Bodega, and was thus enabled to develop his estate. He planted vineyards and orchards and, sowing a thousand acres to wheat, reaped a hundred-fold harvest. As his means increased, Sutter started new industries, — a tannery, a salmon fishery, a grist-mill, a carpenter's shop and a smithy, where all kinds of implements, including ploughs with iron shares, were made by American machinists. The thirty artisans were white men and were paid $2 a day, but the bulk of the merely muscular labor, the ploughing and hoeing, the digging of irrigating ditches, and the making of adobe bricks was performed by three hundred Spanish-speaking Indians, who were meagrely remunerated in blankets and food. For furtherance of household industry, the Indian girls were taught to spin and weave, in anticipation of the day when flocks of sheep should furnish wool for cloth manufacture. The output of these various industries far outran the local demand, and Sutter opened negotiations with a merchant in the Sandwich Islands with a view to shipping butter, cheese, salted salmon, and flour to that profitable market.

Sutter's Fort in 1849.

Sutter's Sawmill at Coloma, 1849.

The Mexican government had not been indifferent to the inroads foreigners were making into this northernmost province, and the traditional jealousies were soon enacted into law. Licenses to take beaver and sea-otter were to be granted only to natives, but the proviso that aliens might be employed to do the trapping largely negatived the prohibition. The naturalization law of 1828 required two years' residence, good character, a useful occupation, and adherence to the Catholic faith. In 1830 Victoria was sent to California with instructions to prevent the Russians and Americans from exceeding one-third of the population. He had the hardihood to banish, on charge of smuggling, Abel Stearns, the most influential American in the south, and he attempted to get rid of Cooper of Monterey, on the ground of conspiracy against the government; but his zeal reacted on his own head, and he was driven from the country. Governor Chico renewed the attack on Stearns and issued an order that every foreigner must present himself before the nearest *alcalde* and justify his residence in the country under penalty of $25 fine, or eight days at hard labor. This edict was effective only in the towns, where it could be enforced. The officers could not reach the hunters and squatters of the interior, almost the only aliens from whom difficulty was to be apprehended. Chico's violent and arbitrary measures soon brought on a revolution. Sympathizing with the anti-Centralists, the Californians determined to be ruled by a *hijo del pais* who would understand the needs and desires of the people. The foreigners abetted this

movement, and with their aid the Mexican incumbent was ousted (1836) and Alvarado put at the head of the government. No sooner was this would-be Washington in control than he turned against his dubious allies. He trumped up a conspiracy charge and arrested Isaac Graham and fifty other warriors from Branciforte and deported them to Mexico, nor did he hesitate to involve foreigners as reputable and law-abiding as Dr. John Marsh. The violation of treaty rights was so gross that the United States government despatched a man-of-war to Monterey, but it arrived too late to rescue Graham's party. France and Great Britian added their protests, and Santa Anna was eventually obliged to repudiate the action of Alvarado, restore the men to liberty, and reinstate them in California. The affair only served to attract attention to the opportunities for realizing a fortune on the Pacific coast, and so enlarging the stream of emigration to California.

Meantime the Mexican government was endeavoring to colonize California. In 1834 two ship-loads of Mexicans arrived at Monterey under conduct of Padres and Hijar, two gentlemen high in the good graces of the administration. The immigrants had been given free passage, maintenance on shipboard, and a stipend of fifty cents a day till they should reach their destination, after the plan of colonization that had proved so signal a failure in the day of Anza and De Neve. Draft animals, tools, seeds, etc., sufficient for the beginnings of agriculture, were to be contributed by the several missions. The location of the colony was to be north of the Bay, near the

Russian settlement or at San Francisco Solano; but the project came to nought. The people were idle, thriftless, and vicious, mere *cholos* (vagabonds) collected at the ports, and the *empressarios* soon got into political difficulties. The only man to profit by this enterprise was General Vallejo, who secured thereby some additional laborers for his colony at Sonoma. The fertile valleys north of the Bay were soon preëmpted by Americans, with whom Vallejo was on very good terms, granting them lands and in various ways furthering their enterprises. Here Young set up the first pit-saw in California, while Stephen Smith, having brought a steam engine and other machinery round the Horn, built a grist-mill and a sawmill on Bodega Bay. Thus, in time, the north shore came to be known as *El Estero Americano.*

According to De Mofras, the white population of Upper California in 1841 was five thousand, of whom four thousand boasted Spanish blood and eighty were born in Spain. There were at that time in the country three hundred and sixty Americans, three hundred English, Scotch, and Irish, and eighty French and French Canadians. The population of Monterey was largely foreign, and this was true in less degree of the other ports and of the two *pueblos* of Los Angeles and San José.[4] The Spaniards preferred to live in the country the easy life of the *ranchero.*

There was a marked contrast in the economic activity displayed by foreigners and Californians. Agriculture, the peculiar province of the Spaniards, was neglected for lack of laborers, and the vineyards, the olive and orange orchards planted by

the *padres* were dying out, the great wheat fields from which grain had been sent to San Blas now produced a paltry six thousand bushels per year, and the care of the hides was so shiftless that the quality had notably fallen off. The brains and capital essential to the industrial development of this rich country were being contributed by foreigners. At San Diego the two mercantile establishments were owned, one by an American named Fitch, and the other by Snooks and Stokes, Englishmen. The five warehouses on the beach still belonged to the Boston hide merchants. In Los Angeles, by this time a town of thirteen hundred inhabitants, all commerce was in the hands of strangers. The wine industry was being developed by Vignes of Bordeaux, the two grist-mills were owned, one by an American, Chapman, and the other by a Frenchman. A Frenchman was working a gold wash at San Francisquito, a cañon just north of San Fernando. There were four asphalt springs south of the town from which the people carted blocks of bitumen with which to roof their houses, but no commercial use was made of this interesting material. At the port of San Pedro, there was but one building, — the hide warehouse belonging to Abel Stearns. At Santa Barbara, the story was repeated, — Englishmen and Americans in the business houses, and Spaniards on the neighboring ranches. The trade of Monterey had fallen into the hands of David Spence, a Scotchman, James Watson, an Englishman, and T. O. Larkin, an American. The population of Branciforte was made up of American hunters who had settled here and married native women.

They were a rough, unruly set. Here Dawson had put up a whip-saw and was fast making money out of the redwood forests, and Isaac Graham, a daredevil from Hardin County, Kentucky, had built a distillery. Even at San José there were many English and Americans, and a party of forty ex-traders had just come over from Taos to settle here. The new settlement of Yerba Buena numbered twenty houses. The principal establishment was that of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose factor, William Rae, was a son-in-law of McLoughlin; but two enterprising Americans, Spears and Hinckley, had put up a saw- and grist-mill, both worked by horse-power. Richardson and Read were doing a good business with the whalers at Sausalito. Simpson observed that the Russians at Bodega, notwithstanding the inferior quality of soil and climate, had extensive wheat fields, orchards, and vineyards. They were working two mills, a tannery, and a blacksmith shop, and had built four sea-going vessels in their little harbor. He remarked with amazement that the Russians and English had come each a hemisphere to collect the rich harvest of furs "which the indolent inhabitants of the province were too lazy to appropriate at their very doors."

Section II

Rival Powers

The year of 1841 was critical as regarded the future of California. The rival foreign interests, Russian, French, British, and American, were at the moment

very nearly balanced, and a slight pressure on one side or another might determine what race was to supersede the indolent Mexicans. The first event of significance was the final withdrawal of the Russian-American Fur Company's post. Their occupation of Bodega Bay and its *hinterland* had been denounced by the successive governors without avail. The British government (1835) had protested that the Russian post contravened a stipulation of the Nootka Convention that no foreign settlement should be attempted in Spanish territory. The United States government made similar representations at St. Petersburg in 1841. This last protest, combined with the facts that the fur-bearing animals were nearly exhausted and that the supplies needed for the Alaskan posts could be more cheaply obtained at Fort Vancouver, finally determined the directors to abandon their foothold on the California coast. The officers and employees were transferred to Sitka and the Aleutian Islands (1841); but the cattle, ordnance, implements, fruit trees, and other property that could not be removed were offered for sale at a lump sum of $30,000. The logical purchaser was the Hudson's Bay Company, which by this time had factories at Yerba Buena, San José, and Monterey, and was proposing to open warehouses at Santa Barbara and Los Angeles for the purchase of hides and tallow. Governor Etholine would have sold out to the Hudson's Bay Company for $20,000 cash, but Sir George Simpson did not think Bodega a valuable acquisition. The supply of furs was exhausted, the post was not well situated for the hide

and tallow trade, nor was the surrounding country the best to be had for agricultural purposes. Moreover, the Russians "admitted that they had no title to the soil, beyond what they had acquired by occupation," and this claim would not be recognized by the Mexican government. So the offer was declined. Sutter purchased the movable property at Bodega to stock his post on American Fork, while Simpson secured a land grant on the San Joaquin, the site of French Camp.

For the Hudson's Bay Company the Russian post was not a good bargain; but to the British Empire it would have been an acquisition of the greatest importance, giving as it did a foothold in California. This Simpson clearly saw. "The country from its natural advantages, possessing, as it does, the finest harbor in the Northern Pacific, in the Bay of San Francisco, and capable, as it is, of maintaining a population of some millions of agriculturists, might become invaluable to Great Britain as an outlet to her surplus population, as a stronghold and protection to her commerce, and interests in these seas, and as a market for her manufactures; and as the principal people in the country, and indeed the whole population, seems anxious to be released from the Republic of Mexico, which can afford them neither protection nor assistance, and are apprehensive that they may fall within the grasp of the United States, I have reason to believe they would require very little encouragement to declare their independence of Mexico, and place themselves under the protection of Great Britain." [5] Sir George assured Lord

Aberdeen that the presence of a British cruiser on the coast and the offer of appointments to some of the influential Spaniards would accomplish the much-to-be-desired result. "If Great Britain be unwilling to sanction or encourage such a declaration, I feel assured, that some step will very soon be taken with the like object, in favor of the United States." [5] An important preliminary would be the planting of a colony on the coast, and Simpson recommended for this purpose the valley of Santa Rosa back of Bodega Bay, the very region which he had rejected as a site for a Hudson's Bay Company post.[6] In his *Voyage round the World*, published four years after the letters were written, Simpson suggested that the government negotiate the acquisition of California in return for the extinction of the debt of $10,000,000 due from the Mexican government to British subjects.

This suggestion had already been made (1839) by Alexander Forbes, the British consul at Tepic; but while the proposition occasioned unfavorable comment among interested Americans, it received no official attention in Great Britain. Neither Palmerston nor Peel was willing to assume any responsibility in the matter. The bondholders, indeed, made some overtures to the Mexican government looking to the acquisition of land in satisfaction of their claims. R. C. Wyllie, their agent, had some correspondence with William Hartnell (1844) respecting the advantages of California for the location of a British colony, but the project came to nothing. Still more visionary was the plan of the Irish priest, McNamara, to transfer the distressed peasants of

Ireland to the unoccupied wastes of this land of opportunity. He petitioned the Mexican government (1845) for a tract between the San Joaquin and the Sierras, on which he promised to settle from one to two thousand Irish families. Either undertaking would have been protested unquestionably by the United States as a violation of the Monroe Doctrine. Even the new business enterprise of the Hudson's Bay Company was doomed to failure. For four years the factory at Yerba Buena carried on a local trade in hides, although the diminishing supply and brisk competition rendered the commerce unprofitable; but in 1845 William Rae became involved in personal and financial difficulties and committed suicide. No one was sent to take his place, and the British consul closed out the business, selling the real estate to Mellus and Howard for $5000. Thus the Hudson's Bay Company ceased to influence the fate of California.

In this same critical year representatives of France and the United States came to California to study the situation and report upon the resources and probable future of the country. The French government sent Duflot de Mofras, an able and experienced man who had served as *attaché* to the embassies of Madrid and the City of Mexico and was in full sympathy with the Spanish population. He was especially commissioned to determine the desirability of placing factories at the ports for the aid and protection of French commerce, particularly the whalers. His report is a full and accurate account of the population and resources of California and its capacity for de-

fence, as observed during a sojourn of many months; but if De Mofras contemplated the Gallic occupation of the country, he found little encouragement in actual conditions. French residents were everywhere in the minority, and they gave unremitting attention to their own affairs, mingled sociably with the Spanish-speaking inhabitants, and showed no signs of political ambition. De Mofras claimed Sutter's Fort as a French colony and noted with satisfaction the strategic importance of the post, commanding as it did the route to the upper Sacramento and the pass over the Sierras; but he had no more practical suggestion than that missionaries be sent to care for the Indians left destitute by the destruction of the missions. In private conversation he freely expressed the opinion that California would eventually belong to the United States.[7]

Wilkes, the commander of the United States exploring expedition, who spent the month of August, 1841, in San Francisco Bay, was much impressed by the "total absence of all government." The *presidio* was in ruins, and its garrison consisted of an absentee officer and one old soldier. No one appeared to have any respect for Alvarado or for the Mexican government. The pay of the troops was months in arrears, while the higher officials helped themselves to good salaries out of the custom-house receipts. The onerous duties and restrictions imposed at Monterey had driven what little traffic there was away from the "open port" to San Francisco Bay. Here Richardson and Vallejo collected such duties as they saw fit and pocketed the proceeds, turning over a mere

San Francisco Bay as De Mofras saw it, 1841.

pittance to the constituted authorities. Before undertaking to put his goods on sale, a shipmaster must first see the commander of the forces and win his favor. Otherwise he would pay penalty for his discourtesy in a hundred petty exactions. Wilkes claimed New Helvetia as an American colony, and with good reason, for Sutter employed a large force of American hunters, and several American families had settled in the vicinity. The conclusion of the American observer was that Upper California must soon separate finally from Mexico and become united with Oregon, a territory with which it had already considerable commercial intercourse. "So may be formed a great state that will control the trade with the Orient and the destinies of the Pacific." This state must be ruled by men of the "Anglo-Norman race." [8] Wilkes gave himself little concern for the authorities at the *presidio;* but to the Americans gathered at Nathan Spear's store o' nights he talked quite freely. The usually discreet officer expressed his conviction that California must ultimately belong to the United States, and that the only rival to be apprehended was Great Britain.

Section III

The Advent of the Emigrants

The ownership of California, like that of Oregon, was to be determined, not by diplomats and battleships, but by settlers in actual possession of the land. Rumors of the fair and fertile country beyond the West, where a farm was to be had for the asking,

soon reached the Missouri frontier. The letters of Dr. John Marsh and the talk of Robidoux, the Santa Fé trader who had followed the Spanish Trail, found their way into the Eastern papers in the summer and autumn of 1840, and their glowing accounts of California were received with credulous eagerness.[9] The pioneers of Platte County, Missouri, were all agog to see this new land and to hazard a chance on the farthest frontier. Some five hundred adventurous souls signed an agreement to migrate in the spring, but the merchants of Westport took alarm lest their market should drift beyond them and they circulated tales of another tenor,[10] magnifying the dangers of the Sierras and the hostility of the Californian authorities. Bartleson and Bidwell alone persisted. They succeeded in gathering a party of forty-eight — one-third women and children — with a dozen wagons drawn by mules and oxen, and supplies adequate for the overland journey. Fitzpatrick was their guide to Bear River, and this they followed to within ten miles of Salt Lake; but there, instead of going on to Fort Hall, they struck directly west in search of Ogden's "unknown river" which was to guide them to the Sierras. The wagons were abandoned in the desert, and thenceforward the provisions, together with the feebler members of the company, were packed on mule back. The party reached Walker River by the middle of October and they forced their way over the mountains by the lofty Sonora Pass. Coming out into the Stanislaus Valley, they arrived at Dr. Marsh's ranch without the loss of a life, but exhausted and destitute. The businesslike fashion

in which the ardent exponent of California's bounty asked payment for food and clothing astonished and disgusted the Missourians, and the fact that their knives, powder, lead, and way-worn cattle were purchased at rates unheard of in the East did not console them for their disillusionment. Vallejo, moreover, demanded their passports and, finding they had none, threw the leaders into jail. The matter was soon adjusted, however, when Marsh and Sutter and other reputable residents offered surety for the peaceable conduct of the new arrivals. The commander-in-chief of the forces of California justified this concession on the ground that he had not soldiers enough to expel the Americans; but the fact that they made themselves useful at Sonoma probably did much to determine his tolerance.

In this same year, another party of Missourians came to California by the Santa Fé route, travelling in company with the traders' caravans and driving a flock of sheep for food. The Spanish Trail was less difficult than that taken by Bidwell's party, but the New Mexican authorities were more obdurate than the Californian, and the road was infested by thieving Apaches. This route was never popular with any but native Mexicans. The journey *via* New Orleans, Vera Cruz, and the City of Mexico to San Blas, and thence by water to San Diego was even more hazardous, for the Mexican roads were patrolled by brigands, and the government afforded no protection. This was the most expensive way of getting to California, costing about $500; but it took only three months' time, whereas the journey round Cape Horn required

four or five months, though it cost only $300. The overland traverse occupied five or six months, but the expenditure was slight. The Missouri farmer could use his own wagons and oxen and lay in a stock of

SOUTHERN EMIGRANT ROUTES TO CALIFORNIA, 1853.

provisions from his own produce. The cost in human life and energy few of these enthusiasts stopped to consider.

The Missourians who came overland were largely from Platte and Pike counties, and were of all frontiersmen the most uncouth. "They were mostly long, gaunt, narrow-chested, round-shouldered men, with long, straight, light-coloured, dried-up-looking hair, small thin sallow faces, with rather scanty beard and moustache, and small grey sunken eyes, which seemed to be keenly perceptive of everything around them. But in their movements the men were slow and awkward, and in the towns especially they

betrayed a childish astonishment at the strange sights occasioned by the presence of the divers nations of the earth. The fact is that till they came to California, many of them had never in their lives before seen two houses together, and in any little village in the mines they witnessed more of the wonders of civilization than ever they had dreamed of. . . . They could use an axe or a rifle with any man. Two of them would chop down a few trees and build a log-cabin in a day and a half, and with their long five-foot-barrel-rifle, which was their constant companion, they could 'draw a bead' on a deer, a squirrel, or the white of an Indian's eye, with equal coolness and certainty of killing." [11]

In 1843 there was a lull in emigration to California. Men waited to hear from their friends before undertaking the difficult journey. The Workman-Rowland party, largely Mexican, went by the southern route and settled in Los Angeles, but none went through by South Pass. The year following, Joseph B. Chiles, who had been one of Bidwell's group, organized a company of eight hundred, and piloted it without difficulty to Fort Hall. There, because of the scarcity of game and pasture, the party divided. The hardier men followed Chiles to Fort Boisé and thence, guided by the Malheur and Pitt rivers, across the Sage Plains to the Sacramento,—a journey so disastrous as to give this thereafter the name of Death Route. The bulk of the company was conducted by Joseph Walker down the Ogden or Mary's River to the "sinks," and thence sixty days' journey south to Owen's

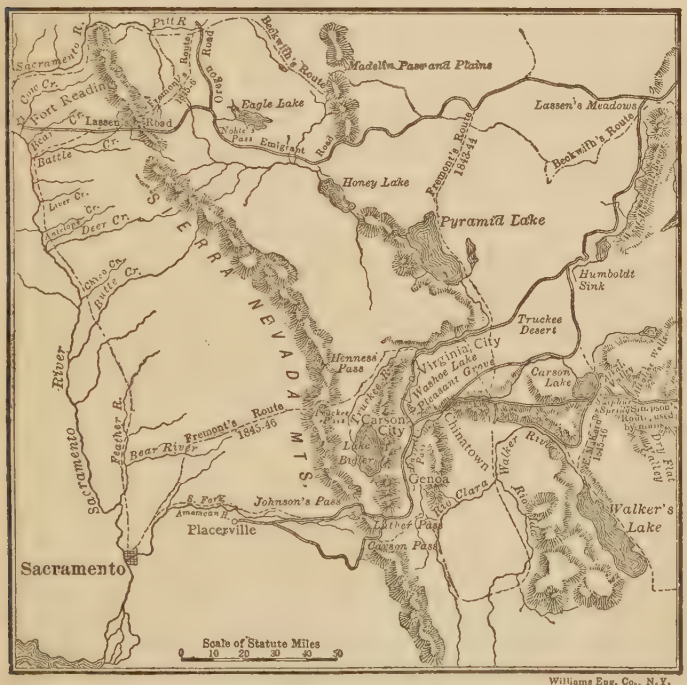
Peak, the "point of the mountain," and Walker's Pass. On Owen's Lake, they were obliged to abandon the wagons and cross the Sierras on foot, suffering great hardships; but they finally got through by the Tulares to Gilroy's ranch, without loss of life.

This year, in response to vigorous protests against the American invasion forwarded by General Vallejo and by Almonte, Mexican minister to the United States, Santa Anna, fearing lest the example of Texas should be repeated, issued an edict prohibiting further immigration to California. Foreigners without passports were denied legal status and the right to purchase land. Castro undertook to drive the American squatters from the Sacramento Valley, but he was not supported by his superiors, and Waddy Thompson, American representative at the City of Mexico, secured the revocation of the edict.

This year, too, came the first Oregonians. L. W. Hastings, who had conducted a party to the Columbia in 1842, was dissatisfied with the region and its damp and gloomy climate, and determined to prospect the Spanish territory to the south. He gathered about him some fifty more malcontents, half of them women and children, and followed the trappers' trail across the Mendocino range. On Rogue River they met a cavalcade of Americans moving from California to Oregon and the two parties stopped to compare experiences. All had evidently expected too much of the Pacific paradise. The discussion of the merits and demerits of Oregon and California had the effect of turning one-third of Hastings'

company back to the Willamette. Hastings and seventeen other men persisted, and brought their families through to Sutter's Fort in excellent health and spirits. Thereafter the Hudson's Bay Company's trail was a much frequented road and was easily rendered feasible for wagons. Another party of thirty-six disappointed Oregonians came down to Sutter's Fort two years later.

In 1844 Murphy and Stevens brought a party fifty strong along Mary's River to the Sinks, and



WAGON ROUTES ACROSS THE SIERRAS, 1858–1859.

thence across forty miles of waterless desert to the Truckee River. This led them to the most prac-

ticable pass in the Sierras and to the head waters of the Bear River. Lassen's route diverged northward at Lassen's Meadows and entered California near the head waters of Feather River. It was three hundred miles longer than the Truckee route, but had the great advantage of easier ascents and descents and better pasturage. This trail was soon beaten into an excellent road which was thronged with emigrant wagons.

Of the half-dozen routes across the Sierras, those by Sonora and Walker passes were soon abandoned as too dangerous. Lassen's Road and Beckwith's trail were sometimes followed; but the most popular routes, because the most direct and least mountainous, were the two middle crossings; viz. that by the Carson and American rivers, or, most feasible of all, the Truckee and Bear River route. The first attempt at a scientific survey was made by Captain Fremont, who, on returning from the Dalles in 1843, was forced, by loss of horses and cattle, to abandon his purpose of recrossing the desert to Salt Lake and to fall back on the forlorn hope of getting supplies in the Spanish country beyond the Sierras. A Washoe Indian guided the explorers up Carson River Cañon and indicated the road taken by a party of white men the preceding summer. A midwinter transit was a far more difficult matter, for the rocky trail was covered with six feet of snow. Sledges were built for the luggage, snow-shoes contrived for the men, and a hard path for the horses was made by packing the snow with mauls and shovels. Even so, the party might have perished

of cold and hunger but for the resourceful courage of the captain. Half the horses were lost or killed for food and two of the men had gone insane before the summit was reached (February 20, 1844). From this point, 9338 feet above sea level, the vast slope of the mountain to the Bay of San Francisco — eighty miles to the west — could be distinctly seen.[12] The descent along the South Fork of the American River was a delightful relief to the exhausted travellers. All the beauty of a California spring was spread out before them. Pasture was abundant, myriad flowers dotted the uplands, magnificent forests of pine covered the foothills, while groves of white oak followed the river courses.

Arrived at Sutter's Fort, Fremont found supplies in abundance and was able to repair his outfit and to secure horses for the return journey. His admiration of the energetic Swiss was expressed in glowing terms. The skill which had rendered the Indians industrious farm-hands in return for a mere pittance of food and clothing was only excelled by the ingenuity with which some thirty white mechanics, American, French, and German, were held to their several employments. Excellent wages ($2.50 to $5 per day) and the prospect of lands on the Sutter grant were potent inducements to the newly arrived emigrants. Several had already settled on adjacent ranches, — Coudrois on the Feather River, Sinclair on the American, while Chiles (whom Fremont had met at Fort Hall) was established on the west bank of the Sacramento. Equipped anew with one hundred and thirty horses and thirty beef cattle,

Fremont set out on his return journey up the San Joaquin Valley and across Walker's Pass to the Spanish Trail.[13] His enthusiasm for this hitherto undescribed region was unfeigned. The party rode through parklike meadows brightened by sheets of purple lupine and yellow poppies and shaded by stately live oaks. Game was abundant, elk and deer and antelope, while droves of wild horses browsed undisturbed except by an occasional Indian foray. Fremont's *Journal* was printed by order of Congress in 1845 and, being widely circulated, gave tremendous impetus to the California fever. His third expedition (1845–1846) was never officially chronicled, but it served no less to augment enthusiasm for the land beyond the Sierras and to incite emigration thither: On this last expedition Fremont crossed the Sierras by the Truckee River, and confirmed the popular impression of the greater feasibility of that route.

Thus far the movement to California had been less than to Oregon. Two or three parties of adventurers, undecided where to locate, half of whom drifted on to the Columbia or returned to the Eastern states, had not added more than two hundred persons to the American population. But by 1845 the systematic encouragement of emigration was well under way. Hastings was in the East, preparing his *Guide* and lecturing on the marvellous resources of California. Dr. Marsh wrote to his old-time friend, Lewis Cass, dilating on the advantage of acquiring this fairest of Mexican provinces for the United States, while Thomas O. Larkin,

United States consul at Monterey, Nathan Spear, and other enthusiastic Californians added their arguments. The Oregon-bound emigrants of 1845 found at Fort Hall two professional guides, Greenwood and McDougal, full of enthusiasm for California and eager to conduct parties thither. By their persuasion, emigrants to the number of one hundred men and one hundred and fifty women who had intended to go to the Willamette were induced to cross the Sierras. In the spring of 1846 it was rumored that one thousand emigrants were bound for California, and Hastings, Hudspeth, and Chiles set out to guide them to the promised land. Hastings had discovered a new route from Fort Bridger by Echo and Weber cañons, passing Salt Lake south of that dread morass, and then directly west across the Great American Desert to the Sierras. It considerably shortened the distance (thirteen days as compared with thirty-five), but increased the peril from absence of pasture and water. Several parties under the personal care of Hudspeth and Hastings made the journey in safety, although with heavy loss of cattle; but the Reed-Donner company met a tragic fate. Their traverse of the Great Basin was hindered by a divided command, and they reached the mountains so late that the summits were covered with snow. Despairing of making their way through to the west slope, they camped on Donner's Lake, just beyond the divide, and in this death-trap half the number (forty-three) perished before help could reach them. Thereafter Hastings' Cut Off was little used except by Mormons, and the Humboldt and Truckee rivers were usually followed.

The valley of the Humboldt, two hundred and fifty miles long, afforded a difficult roadway for emigrant wagons. The narrow flats were covered with sage-bush, breast high, and pasture was scarce, while the river flowing at the bottom of a rocky ravine could be reached only at rare intervals. The Shoshones, rendered hostile by outrages committed by unscrupulous white men, were lying in wait ready to ambush the weaker parties and to carry off cattle and horses. The greatest dread of the Humboldt route, however, was the Forty-mile Desert between the Sink and the Carson River, for throughout this stretch of sand and alkali, there was neither water nor grass to be had nor any shelter from the blazing sun. Travellers fortified their live stock as best they might at the slimy, brackish waters of the lower Humboldt, and usually attempted to make the Carson in one night's forced march; but this required expert leadership and iron endurance, and many fell by the way. Jules Remy, who crossed the desert in 1855, found the trail strewn with wreckage. "Here and there broken wagons abandoned by the emigrants indicated the roadway, and we met with poles, wheels, and planks in all directions. On all sides also were skeletons and hides of oxen." Remy describes several companies who had brought droves of cattle and horses over the plains from Ohio, only to lose them in this waste. In two instances the owner and leader had been killed by the Indians, and beside the trail he noticed the graves of "three emigrants who had left the States, where they were living in comfort, to seek a precarious

fortune in the land of Eldorado." At the bend of the Carson River, the desert-worn caravans came upon the first habitations of white men,—"three huts formed of poles covered with rotten canvas full of holes." [14] One was a blacksmith's shop where wagons and harness might be repaired, one was a miserable excuse for a hotel, and the third belonged to a trader who supplied provisions to emigrants and Indians. All three of the then residents of "Ragtown" were, in Remy's estimation, arrant thieves.

From this point, according to the preferences of leader or guide, the traverse of the Sierras might be made by following the Carson River to Johnson's Pass, or the Truckee to the higher but more feasible divide discovered by the Murphy party.

In the first eight years of the overland migration to California, some six hundred and fifty men and as many women and children made their way to the coast by prairie schooner. These immigrants were largely farmers from the Missouri frontier, and they settled in Sacramento, Napa, and Petaluma valleys without much regard to legal title. Squatters by instinct and habit, they were quite content to adopt Hastings' suggestion that a little delay would abrogate the necessity of qualifying under the Mexican law. In 1845 Hastings estimated that there were two hundred American farmers settled north of the Bay. They were all doing well, having excellent crops of wheat, corn, oats, and flax, and fine herds of cattle and horses. Their pastures lay unenclosed, for it was cheaper to hire Indians to guard the animals than to put up fences or dig

ditches. Their houses were built of adobe because lumber was scarce and the Indians understood only the Spanish mode of building. The enthusiastic advocate of the American occupation of California thought the native *ranchero* so hopelessly antiquated as to be unworthy of the land he tilled. His plough was a "mere forked stick, one prong of which, being pointed, answers as the share, and the other having a notch cut at the end, to which a rope may be attached, constitutes the beam, while the main stalk, extending back a few feet from the union of the two prongs, constitutes the handle." His means of transportation was even more primitive. "A dry bullock's hide, to which one end of a long rawhide rope is attached, the other end of which is attached to the pommel of the saddle" of the horseman. "Upon this hide, thus dragging upon the ground, are heaped vegetables, fowls, and whatever else they may have in readiness for the market." [15]

Another attempt to exclude Americans from California was made in 1845, when Santa Anna sent an order to this effect to Governor Pico, but the governor saw no reason for alarm. He continued to give the foreigners every facility for trade and to award land grants to such as could pay for them or had found means of currying favor. An official statement published by Almonte to the effect that the popular belief that lands were to be had in California by right of occupation was unfounded, and that no grants made to foreigners were legal without the express sanction of the supreme govern-

ment, had no more result than Santa Anna's abortive order. The prairie schooners continued to climb the mountain passes, and hardy pioneers carved out farms and preëmpted pasture lands along the lower Sacramento valley.

Section IV

The Acquisition of New Mexico and California

By 1846 there were seven hundred Americans in California, one hundred British, and one hundred French, Germans, and Italians. There were perhaps seven thousand people of Spanish blood and ten thousand domesticated Indians, as the neophytes were now designated. All enterprise and industry originated with the foreign population, and of the several races represented, the Americans were by all odds the most energetic. The first sea-going vessel built in California was launched by a Yankee mechanic at San Pedro. The first lumber was cut for market at Branciforte by the Kentuckian, Isaac Graham. The first steam sawmill was set up at Bodega by Stephen Smith, the first steam flour-mill belonged to Captain Hinckley of Yerba Buena. Politically as well as industrially the Americans were dominant, and as their numbers increased and their reputation for valor and determination spread, Pico and Castro recognized that they could enforce no exclusive regulations, even had they desired to do so. The military strength of the Californian government consisted of forty-seven antiquated cannon and three hundred and seventeen undisciplined

soldiers, while there was said to be not enough ammunition in the *presidio* of San Francisco to fire a salute.

No American familiar with the situation had any doubt that the annexation of Texas would precipitate a conflict with Mexico. When Almonte withdrew from Washington, and Arista began to collect troops at Matamorras on the Rio Grande, President Polk announced that the obstinate adversary had "at last invaded our territory and shed the blood of our citizens on our own soil," and that we had no alternative but war. General Taylor was despatched to defend our "historic boundary," General Scott sailed for Vera Cruz with instructions to march to the City of Mexico, while General Kearney led the Army of the West across the Plains to Santa Fé. The latter expedition had an excellent chronicler in the person of Colonel Cooke, who went in advance to reconnoiter the route. New Mexico had changed in no respect since Gregg described conditions there prevailing. The adobe villages looked like "extensive brick yards," cluttered with piles of yellow bricks and smoking kilns. All pretence of protecting the ranches against Indian forays had ceased, and the Navajos and Apaches had swept the land of sheep and driven the people to take refuge in the villages. The great ranch owners lived like feudal lords, each surrounded by his force of peons whom he fed and clothed and kept continually in his debt. The prohibitory tariff imposed by Armijo had ruined the St. Louis trade and left the people no resource but the costly imports from Vera Cruz,

while the custom house was still the scene of shady transactions from which the governor was the chief beneficiary. The few shops were kept by Americans, and the Pueblo Indians were the only other industrious element in the population. Agriculture had reached so low a stage that the country was nearly destitute of provisions, and the military defences were of the paltriest description. Governor Armijo boasted an army of six thousand men, but he could not induce them to march on Raton Pass — the natural gateway to Santa Fé — against Kearney's force of seventeen hundred. He was soon obliged to abandon the city and retreat to El Paso, leaving behind him, among other accoutrements of war, a battered cannon marked, "Barcelona, 1778." The Mexican population acquiesced in this ignominious fiasco, and the only energetic defence was made by the Indians. The Pueblos of Taos would not surrender their fortress dwelling until one hundred and fifty of their braves had fallen.

Once master of the towns, General Kearney administered the oath of allegiance to the *alcaldes* and pronounced the people "released from all allegiance to Mexico and citizens of the United States." The Mexican government had failed to secure the first principles of well-being, and the government of the United States promised a more prosperous régime. Nevertheless, the chronicler blushed for the rapidity of the transformation. "They have been informed that they shall soon have a voice in their own government. Doubtless this flagrant servitude will be gradually broken up; but when shall such people

be capable of self-government! There will be a territorial government for thirty years — and the language will not change faster than the color of the citizens." [16] "The great boon of American citizenship [was] thus thrust, through an interpreter, by the mailed hand, upon eighty thousand mongrels who cannot read, — who are almost heathens, — the great mass reared in real slavery, called peonism, but still imbued by nature with enough patriotism to resent this outrage of being forced to swear an alien allegiance, by an officer who had just passed their frontier." [17] The Army of the West then marched on to California, "to repeat the same rather dramatic exploits." "New Mexico has furnished the scene of a good rehearsal at the least." [18]

There were two ways of reaching California. The old Spanish Trail by Green River involved too heavy risks in the way of snow-covered mountain and parched desert, and Cooke was sent to reconnoiter the Gila River route. From El Paso del Norte he made his way *via* Bernalillo, Albuquerque, and Isletta, to Frontera and Tucson. The country was too rough for wagons, but the *mesas* were covered with grama grass, frost proof and excellent provender for the mules, while herds of wild horses and wilder cattle provided food for the men. The Camino del Diablo and the Colorado Desert presented greater difficulties. Leagues of drifting sand and baked clay covered with mesquite bushes and artemesia, where the only surface water was the infrequent rain pools, and wells must be dug to the substratum of clay, where the chief food was that

furnished by the mesquite bean, — these difficulties did not discourage Cooke's Mormon recruits. The men covered their naked feet with rawhide and woollen rags and marched on with a patience born of despair. Two months after leaving El Paso, they reached the Coast Range and running water. Kearney found California in a state of war.

President Polk had hoped to purchase California, and he sent Slidell to the City of Mexico with a proposal for the cession of the province, but the offer was indignantly refused. The determination of the expansionist administration to secure complete control of the Pacific Coast was not, however, abandoned. Its policy was to keep on good terms with the Californians, while allowing no other power to acquire political foothold in the territory. Secretary Buchanan's secret instructions to Larkin (October, 1845) made this quite evident. The confidential agent of the government was to use all suitable means to conciliate the Spanish population and to impress them with the advantages of a closer connection with the United States. There is good reason to believe that California would have accepted the protection of her powerful neighbor with even less protest than New Mexico but for Fremont's unlucky interference. This gifted and ambitious young officer, with some aid from Senator Benton, had succeeded in securing (1845) a commission to explore the passes of the Sierras in the interest of the emigrants. The expedition of 1843–1844 had rendered him familiar with the Oregon Trail and with the Carson River route to the Pacific. With a

party of engineers, to which he added some sixty "mountain men" — the noted guide and hunter Kit Carson among them — the "pathfinder" crossed the Sierras in midwinter (December, 1845) by the Truckee Pass already discovered by Murphy and Stevens in 1844. Arrived in California, Fremont got Micheltorema's permission to explore the interior; but his sudden and unexplained appearance within a day's march of Monterey was resented, and he was ordered to leave the country. His retreat toward Oregon was checked at Klamath Lake, where the party was overtaken by Lieutenant Gillespie with a packet of papers from Washington, — family letters and a copy of the Larkin instructions. Fremont was apparently more impressed by the family counsels than by Buchanan's conciliatory program, for he immediately turned south, encamped at the Three Buttes, and began to circulate those rumors of General Castro's bloody designs against the American settlers and of his own readiness to defend his countrymen, which instigated the Bear Flag revolt. The effect of this ill-timed uprising was to engender in the minds of the Californians a distrust of the government that had presumably authorized the filibustering exploit, and in the newly arrived immigrants a hatred and contempt of the Spanish inhabitants, — a misunderstanding which seriously handicapped the legitimate representatives of the administration in carrying out its plan of peaceful annexation.

The Bear Flag Republic was proclaimed at Sonoma on June 15, 1848. Admiral Sloat raised

Pass in the Sierra Nevada.

the American flag at Monterey on July 7. In the three weeks' interval there had been some dishonorable bloodshedding on the part of both the insurgents and their antagonists, all hope of a peaceful solution of the imbroglio was dissipated, and Sloat's pacific proclamations fell on deaf ears. There was reason to fear that the Californians might appeal to England for protection, and the belated arrival of a British fleet at Monterey brought the excitement to a climax. Stockton was appointed to succeed Sloat in command of the Pacific squadron, and the systematic conquest of the country was begun. Governor Pico and General Castro fled to Mexico, and Vallejo made terms with the invaders; but there were braver spirits among the Californians. The men of the south made a plucky fight for their independence and they succeeded in inflicting a humiliating defeat on Mervine and his marines at San Pedro and on the more formidable Kearney at San Pascual. The issue could not long be doubtful, however, for Mexico could do nothing to aid the loyalists. In the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (February 2, 1848), New Mexico and California were ceded to the United States in consideration of an indemnity of $15,000,000.

Once in possession of California, the Americans declared the obnoxious Mexican customs and the inefficient and arbitrary rule of the *alcaldes* intolerable, and they clamored for state government and a code based upon the common law. Congress was slow to act on the California case, both parties to the vexed slavery controversy hoping to win some

advantage on the Pacific Coast. Impatient of delay and harassed by the anarchic condition of society, the settlers called a popular convention (1849) and adopted a state constitution. Although more than half the delegates had originated in states below the Mason and Dixon line, a clause excluding slavery was adopted by unanimous vote. The effort of the extreme pro-slavery politicians and the Mexicans of the Los Angeles district to divide California into two states and so leave opportunity for independent action was frustrated, and thus slavery was forever debarred from the new America beyond the Sierras.

Section V

The Land Question

There was far more bitterness in California over the question of land titles and the validity of the grants made by Spanish and Mexican governors than was aroused by the exclusion of slave labor. All properties and deeds recognized by the Mexican administration had been guaranteed by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; but to American pioneers, accustomed to wander over a public domain in any portion of which they might acquire preëmption rights by the mere fact of settlement, it seemed intolerable that an alien government should have made over large tracts of the best land to men who had done little or nothing to deserve such an advantage. The report of General Halleck (1847) voiced the sentiments of the Americans. Few of the grantees had fulfilled the terms of their

empressario contract, and the greater part of the wide estates claimed by them lay uncultivated. None of the grants had been accurately surveyed, and their boundaries, roughly indicated by natural landmarks, were doubtful and not infrequently overlapped. Some of the deeds were of dubious origin, bearing the signature of Pico, the recent *de facto* governor, who had utilized his brief period of authority to enrich himself and his friends. Many of the grants made to foreigners had never been indorsed by the Mexican government in accordance with the law. Some were patent forgeries. The squatters, however, did not concern themselves about these discriminations. They had small respect for the technicalities of the law and did not hesitate to challenge titles as ancient as those of Nieto and Yerba and as well merited as those of Sutter.

In 1849 the secretary of the interior deputed to William Carey Jones the delicate task of investigating the validity of the California land grants, in order to determine what portion of the territory fell under the jurisdiction of Congress. The Jones report (submitted in May, 1850) represented an exhaustive and impartial study of the archives, both at Monterey and at the City of Mexico. He came to conclusions not at all in accord with the wishes of the squatters. To wit, the bulk of the Mexican grants had been made in conformity with the law of 1828 and were "perfect titles," "equivalent to patents from our own government"; in cases where the technical evidences of title were missing or

defective, long and undisputed occupation should be regarded as establishing title; the *pueblo* four league grants which had been distributed, under the regulations of de Neve, among the original *pobladores*, should be doubly respected. "They were, in the first place, the meagre rewards for expatriation and arduous and hazardous public service in a remote and savage country. They are now the inheritance of the descendants of the first settlers of the country who redeemed it from barbarism. Abstractly considered there cannot be any higher title to the soil."[19] There were without question some simulated grants issued since the American conquest with the connivance of the governors; and these should be put to a rigid test.[20] The country west of the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys, precisely the most available and productive portion of the territory, was pretty fully covered by grants that antedated the American occupation; but there was hope for the immigrants in the likelihood that an accurate survey would prove that many holdings were far in excess of the original grant, leaving a large surplus still available.

Now the pioneers, with childlike egotism, held that they, being American citizens, were entitled to the best of everything in California. It was intolerable that a few hundred despised Mexicans should have control of vast tracts along the coast, leaving only the remoter districts for the *bona fide* farmer. What right had the Vallejos, the Arguellos, or even Captain Sutter to eleven league grants? These great estates savored of effete aristocracy and

should be disregarded. The land belonged to the hardy men who had faced the dangers of desert and sierra and had brought the institutions and laws of the United States to the Pacific Coast. The Oregon precedent gave warrant for the belief that every emigrant to California would be given a farm of one hundred and sixty acres in the most promising part of the territory. Undeterred by the conclusions of the Jones report, incoming Americans proceeded to settle on the most desirable lands, hoping to establish a preëmption title when the day of settlement came. Especially at the commercial centers, San Francisco, Sacramento and Stockton, were the squatters active in seizing on attractive lots, quite regardless of ownership. The town of Sacramento was built on the low ground along the river a few miles below New Helvetia. The land had been sold by Captain Sutter to Samuel Brannan and other speculators who proceeded to oust the squatters. Organized resistance was determined on, and the leaders drew up a statement of their position: "Whereas the land in California is presumed to be public land, therefore, *Resolved*, That we will protect any settler in the possession of land to the extent of one lot in the city, and one hnndred and sixty acres in the country, till a valid title shall be shown for it." [21] Alvarado's grant to Sutter ran from the Feather River on the east to the Sacramento River on the west, and from the Three Peaks on the north to latitude 38° 49′ 32″ (within twenty miles of Sacramento) on the south, and did not, therefore, cover the disputed district; but the

legislature and the courts sided with the speculators, and the controversy came to blows. The movement spread to other towns, and under the name of "the preëmptioners' league" and "the settlers' party," the squatters exercised a strong influence on national legislation.

By an "act to ascertain and settle private land claims in the state of California" (March 3, 1851), Congress undertook to arbitrate these difficulties. A land commission was appointed before which all titles must be presented and vindicated on pain of forfeiture; but appeal from the decision of the commission might be had to the United States district court and thence to the Supreme Court. The claimant, having run successfully the gantlet of these three tribunals, must still have his grant delimited by the United States surveyor-general for California before he was entitled to a final patent from the general land office. Titles that were rejected or that failed of presentation within two years after the appointment of the commission, escheated to the public domain and were thereupon open to preëmption. This extraordinary piece of partisan legislation was earnestly opposed by Senator Benton, on the ground that it called in question every land title in the state (titles that had been assumed to be valid in the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo), and imposed upon the Californians a long and costly process of litigation. These considerations had little weight, however, in opposition to the representations of Senator Gwin, advocate of the settlers' party. The result was to involve the country in an endless snarl of litigation.

The California landowner, never a good business man, ignorant of American customs and court procedure, had now to defend his antiquated title against the shrewd and persistent American claimant. Whatever the decision of the commissioners, the case was almost invariably appealed to the district and then to the Supreme Court, and the costs of the successive suits, together with the lawyers' fees, far exceeded the annual income from the estate in question. The harassed *ranchero* could offer only land and cattle in payment, and it not infrequently happened that before the suit was ended, the property had passed into the hands of the attorneys in the case.

The ultimate findings of the Supreme Court justified the greater part of the Mexican titles. Of eight hundred and thirteen titles brought before the commission, six hundred and four were finally confirmed, one hundred and ninety were rejected, and nineteen were withdrawn as indefensible. (Many of the smaller landowners and most of the Indians failed to present their claims and so forfeited their lands.) It is probable that few legal titles were set aside, but the Spanish landowners were none the less impoverished and despoiled. The American claimants suffered hardly less. The costs of litigation, the impossibility of selling or mortgaging any portion of the land so long as the title was dubious, the discouragement to permanent improvements, — all these deterrents, prolonged through the critical period when there was most need that the soil should be brought under cultivation, served to check the

agricultural development of California and the prosperity of the original settlers. Far better for the squatters would have been the measures urged by Benton and Fremont, based on the tacit recognition of all Mexican titles and the calling before the commission of only such grants as were made subsequent to the conquest or were challenged as fraudulent. Farm land was at that time "cheap as dirt" in California. The very best of it, that about Santa Barbara, might be bought at twenty-five cents per acre.[22] At this rate it would have been more economical to purchase a quarter section than to go through the long, anxious, and costly process of disproving the title of the Spanish incumbent. The general result of the long controversy was not to distribute the great *ranchos* among American homesteaders, but to segregate them in the hands of successful lawyers or to turn them over to the bankers who had advanced money to plaintiff or defendant. A land monopoly far more sinister than that the squatters had denounced was thereby created, while the violence that was often exercised in defence of a dubious claim debased the standard of citizenship and discouraged the better type of immigration.

The remnants of land left in the possession of the *rancheros* at the end of the long litigation were soon further diminished in an equally legal but no less effective fashion. Shrewd and merciless Americans, with money to lend, plied the short-sighted and luxurious Spaniards with attractive opportunities for spending. A loan at five or six per cent per month, secured by a mortgage on the estate, provided the

wherewithal for gambling, horse-racing, or other exciting indulgence, and it was rarely possible to meet the obligation incurred in time to avoid foreclosure. Thus, much of the Spanish inheritance came into the hands of the strangers. William Chandless, who passed through Los Angeles in 1855, describes the situation there: "One of the first things that catches your eye is a notice on door-posts and in newspapers, such as the following: '*Venta por el Sheriff.* John Smith *v.* José Sepolva. *El Sheriff vendera a la puerta de la casa di Condade al mayor postor Todo ese*, etc., *de dicho* José Sepolva.' So little justice is done between American citizens in California that no one, I suppose, even pretends that a Spaniard, unless he offered a very heavy bribe, would have any chance of a favorable decision." [23] Much as one must deplore this ruthless spoliation of a race, it is only just to bear in mind that the greater portion of the Mexican grants represented a no less ruthless and far more unscrupulous spoliation of the missions and the mission Indians.

Section VI

The Age of Gold

In *The Californian* of March 15, 1848, there appeared the following bit of news: "Gold mines found. In the newly-made race-way of the Saw Mill recently erected by Captain Sutter, on the American Fork, gold has been found in considerable quantities. One person brought thirty dollars' worth to New Helvetia, gathered there in a short time.

California, no doubt, is rich in mineral wealth; great chances here for scientific capitalists. Gold has been found in almost every part of the country." The editor's confidence in the mineral wealth of California was at that moment unfounded, for the only other gold known was that at San Francisquito, in the *arroyo* above San Fernando, and placers there had proved unprofitable for lack of water. Marshall's find at Columa was not yet understood to have any deeper importance. His discovery of particles of free gold in the river had been made on January 18 and immediately communicated to Sutter; but the latter was anxious to finish the mill and get ready some lumber and in other ways make preparations for the anticipated rush. His efforts to keep the discovery secret did not prevail, however, for a teamster carried some of the shining metal to Samuel Brannan, then in charge of the store at New Helvetia, and this shrewd purveyor of supplies was not slow in publishing the tidings. Even so, it was two months in reaching the coast. San Francisco was one hundred miles away, the roads were nearly impassable with the spring rains, and even such news as this travelled slowly. The fact that gold sand was being scooped up by the handful on the banks of the South Fork once proclaimed, every able-bodied man in adjacent California prepared to reap the benefit. On June 1, Larkin (now naval agent of the United States at San Francisco) wrote to Secretary Buchanan, making due report of the discovery and its probable effect.[24] Twenty thousand dollars' worth of this gold had been brought to San Francisco during the last two

or three weeks, together with the statement that men were making $10, $20, and $50 a day at the diggings. Half the houses in San Francisco were empty, "the owners — storekeepers, lawyers, mechanics, and laborers — all gone to the Sacramento with their families." Teamsters who were earning from five to eight dollars a day had struck work and gone up the river. Several soldiers had already deserted, while the United States ship *Anita* retained but six of her marines. A schooner fresh from the Sandwich Islands had lost her entire crew. The harbor was crowded with merchantmen abandoned by the sailors. (The trade of the whaling vessels was finally lost because of this risk.) An American captain, finding that he could not hold his men, had formed a partnership with them for working the placers. He furnished seamen's wages, food, and tools, and was to give them one-third of the proceeds. The servants of a Chinese merchant, recently arrived, had deserted him for this "golden adventure." *The Californian* had suspended for lack of men, and *The Star* office had but one printer left. Writing again on June 28, 1848, after a visit to the American River, Larkin stated that there were then two thousand people on the American and Copines rivers, nine-tenths of them foreigners, and they had accumulated during the months of May and June two thousand dollars' worth of gold dust. Three-fourths of the houses in San Francisco were now deserted, and property was selling for the price of the ground alone. Both newspapers had suspended for lack of printers and subscribers. Monterey had caught the

infection, and was being deserted by its male inhabitants; "brick-yards, sawmills and *ranchos* are left perfectly alone." One hundred per cent advance in wages would not hold employees. The *alcaldes* of San Francisco and Sonoma had abandoned their posts, and society seemed on the verge of dissolution. Should the news reach the emigrants now on the road, the whole body would be diverted from Oregon to California. At least half the able-bodied men of Oregon (three thousand) came to California in the summer of 1848, leaving their crops unharvested, and but for the strenuous efforts of the women and children left behind, there would have been great suffering on the Willamette farms the following winter. (Joaquin Miller came to California with a party of Oregonians, 1851.) All Sonora seemed on the move; four thousand Mexicans arrived in California before 1849.

In a report to the secretary of war, dated August 17, 1848, Governor Mason described California as a land peopled by women and children, nearly all the men having gone to the mines. Desertion from the army had become a serious evil, and it would soon be impossible to keep a force sufficient to maintain order unless soldiers' wages were considerably advanced. Officers found it impossible to live on their salaries under the new and unprecedented conditions, and were held at their posts only by the sternest sense of duty. The governor describes a visit he had just made to Sutter's Fort and beyond. "Along the whole route mills were lying idle, fields of wheat were open to cattle and horses, houses were vacant and

farms going to waste." The *Embarcadero* on the river below the fort was thronged with traffic, — supplies and prospectors going out to the diggings and successful miners returning with their gold. At the Mormon Diggings, twenty-five miles up the South Fork, some two hundred men were at work with pans, Indian baskets, and cradles. At Coloma, twenty-five miles beyond, the scene was repeated. Mason estimated that there were four thousand men, half of them Indians, at work here and on the other tributaries of the Sacramento — the Feather, Yuba, Bear, and Consumnes rivers — and that the average yield per man was from one to three ounces per day. At the then price of gold (ten dollars per ounce) this would mean a total daily output of from $30,000 to $50,000. Every man, except the Indians, was working for himself. Sunol & Co. had a gang of thirty natives washing "dirt" on Weber's Creek. They had no comprehension of the worth of gold and were paid in food and clothing of far less value than their findings. On the North Fork of the American, Sinclair, a neighboring ranchman, had fifty Indians at work, and the net proceeds of five weeks' washing was $16,000 in gold dust. Captain Sutter, however, was not digging for gold, — not even at Columa, where his proprietary rights were respected by the miners; but he was carefully and with much difficulty gathering in his wheat crop. Since the yield should be forty thousand bushels and flour was selling at $36 per bushel, his decision to abide by his ranch was a wise one. Brannan, too, had stuck to his store, and his receipts in "dust" for the ten

weeks between May 1 and July 10 amounted to $36,000.

Sutter's diary of May 19 reads: "The great rush from San Francisco arrived at the Fort — all my friends and acquaintances filled up the houses and the whole fort. I had one little Indian boy to make them roasted ripps, etc., as my cooks left me like everybody else, the Merchants, Doctors, Lawyers, Sea-captains, etc., all came up and did not know what to do, all was in confusion, all left their wives and families in San Francisco, and those which had none locked their doors, abandoned their houses, offered them for sale cheap, a few hundred dollars, house and lot, some of these men were just like greazy [crazy]. Some of the most prudentest of the Whole, visited the mines and returned immediately and began to do a very profitable business, and vessels soon came from everywhere with all kind of Merchandize, the whole old trash which was lying for years unhoused, on the Coasts of South and Central America, Mexico, Sandwich Islands, etc. All found a good Market here." [25]

Mason's report was the most detailed information concerning the discovery that had thus far reached the Eastern states. It was published with the president's message sent to Congress on December 5. Guarded though its statements were, it produced a furor for California. The far-away and much debated acquisition seemed suddenly transformed into the fabled island of the Amazons, and men were ready to sacrifice all sober, workaday prospects for this chance to pick up gold without let or hinderance.

ROUTES TO CALIFORNIA, 1858.

Duration

120 to 150 days — By sailing vessels direct from London, Liverpool, Hamburg or Bremen — round Cape Horn

from 35 to 45 days — By Steamers from Liverpool, Southampton, or Hamburg & Bremen — to Aspinwall

from 33 to 40 days — By Steamers from Liverpool, London, or Hamburg & Bremen (or Sail) — to New York or New Orleans from whence by Steamers to Aspinwall

from whence by rail in 3 Hours across the Isthmus to Panama — from Panama to San Francisco by Steamer

from 10 to 22 Steam 35 to 55 Sail & land travel from 100 to 150 days — By Steamers or Sail from the above parts to New York or New Orleans — from whence to St. Louis — from St. Louis across the plains by Waggons.

The waggon road now being constructed from the Mississippi to California will have military Stations every 15 miles.

The Pacific Railroad is almost laid out, and the Act for its construction may pass the Congress next year.

There is another crossing of the Isthmus through Nicaragua by Steam Boat up the river San Juan & only 12 miles land.

A railroad across Mexico (the Tehuantepec route) is in course of construction.

There was a rush to be first in the field. At the Atlantic ports ships were chartered for the four months' voyage round the Horn and crowded to the danger point. The Missourians and other frontiersmen organized parties to cross the Plains; but a shorter and less precarious route was opportunely provided by the new monthly mail service to California and Oregon, *via* Panama. William H. Aspinwall had secured the mail contract for the Pacific Coast, and sent three steamers round the Horn in 1849 to run between Panama and San Francisco.[26] George Law had made similar arrangements for the route between New York and Chagres. The first steamer sailed from New York just after the news of the gold discovery reached that city, and her passenger accomodations were stuffed with adventurers. When the ship reached Chagres, it appeared that a steamer from New Orleans had docked ahead of her, and there was a mad rush on the part of the passengers to get up the river and across the Isthmus to the Pacific side in time to catch the Aspinwall steamer. Unfortunately, the *California* was late, and the impatient crowd had to wait week after week in the dirty and miasma-infested little port. When the first ship-load of Easterners reached San Francisco late in February, 1849, they found a tent city thronged with fortune seekers. From every port in the Pacific men had sailed to the new Eldorado. Experienced miners from Sonora, Peru, and Chili, bringing their primitive tools, ex-convicts from Australia versed in methods of money-making, honest and dishonest, Kanakas from the Sandwich Islands,

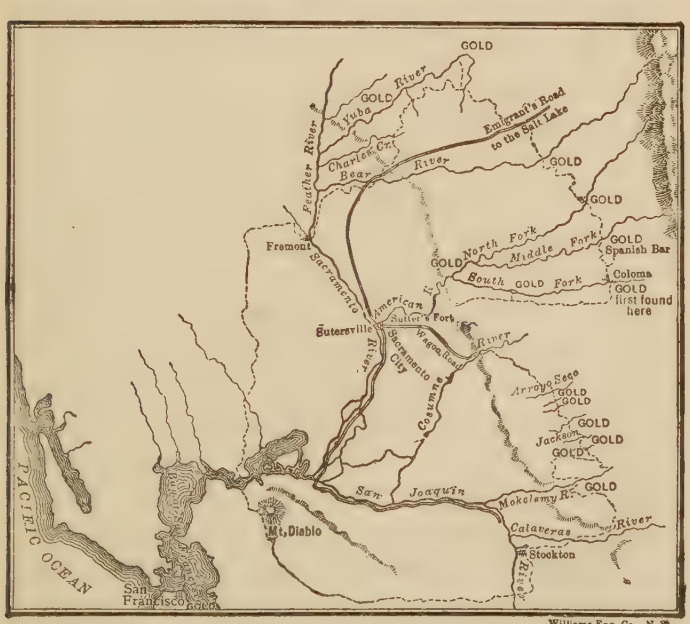
Chinese and Malays from the gambling dens of the Far East,—all bent on winning wealth from the golden sands of California. Larkin's report of June, 1848, states that nine-tenths of the men then in the field were foreigners. Hittell estimates that of the twenty thousand miners on the ground in 1849, only one-fourth were Americans. Certainly in the latter year the foreigners carried off three-fourths of the gold.[27]

Europe caught the fever in 1849, and from England, Ireland, Wales, and Cornwall, from Germany and the Scandinavian Peninsula, even from France, the least migratory of nations, adventurers flocked to the far Pacific Coast. The revolutions of 1848, with the consequent industrial depression, had greatly increased the number of unemployed, and the prospect of gathering gold in a virgin land, where there were no vested rights, appealed to the proletariat. Five trading and mining companies were chartered in London before January 15, 1849. Emigrating companies were formed in Paris (La Californie, Lingot d'Or, Aurifère, etc.), and some four thousand of the poor were transported to California, the costs being met by lotteries. In addition to these assisted emigrants, many Frenchmen came on their own account, and many more deserted from the ships despatched to this new and promising market by the merchants of Paris and Bordeaux. The French were not very successful as miners because of their love of pleasure and their inability to organize effectively, and they gravitated to the towns. Here they grew prosperous keeping the restaurants, shops,

theatres, and saloons where the American miner spent his money. Miners returning from the diggings had exciting tales to tell of lucky strikes,—nuggets found lying in the bed of a stream and flakes of gold scooped from crevices in the cañon wall with dirk-knife and spoon; phenomenal losses, too,—hundreds of pounds of gold dust stolen by tricky partners or wandering thieves; tales also of the summary vengeance exacted by vigilance committees and lynch law.

The methods of getting out the gold were still of the simplest. Three or four men usually worked in company. The first shovelled the "dirt" from the bank or shoal of the river or from the "pay streak" of a near-by *arroyo*, another carried it to the water, a third rocked the "cradle,"—a semicircular trough with a perforated iron sieve at the upper end, through which the dirt was sifted and washed. The earth ran off with the water, while the gold dust and "black sand," having greater specific gravity, were caught on cleats fastened to the floor of the trough. The most experienced man of the "gang" was intrusted with the task of "panning out" the gold, *i.e.* blowing off the "black sand" (iron pyrites) and scraping up the virgin gold. The day's takings were divided equally among the partners, except the nuggets which, according to universal custom, were pocketed by the finder. For this simple operation, energy and good will were important factors, but no capital was necessary, and any ignoramus with muscle and endurance could succeed as well as a man of brains. The miners from Sonora and Chili had little advantage over an

American farmer who had never seen a placer. Their rude tools — the pan, the *arrastra*,[28] and the amalgam process — were easily imitated, and the Americans were soon quite as expert as the best of them and even introduced labor-saving devices. The processes were purely mechanical, without resort to metallurgy, and very wasteful. Fully half the gold dust (one-twentieth in 1866, according to Hittell) was washed away down-stream. Where water was not to be had, the earth and gravel were ground up together and the dry powder was tossed from a pan into the air, so that the lighter earth and sand were blown away by the breath or the wind, and the gold fell back into the pan. This method was often prac-



THE NORTHERN MINES.

tised by the Sonorans. The Americans sometimes poured a stream of silt-laden water over the rough surface of a blanket.

The gold fields of California lay in the foot-hills of the Sierras at an elevation of from one thousand to five thousand feet, and comprised the westward slope of the great interior valley. For a distance of five hundred miles, the river wash, the *arroyos*, and even certain elevated plateaus like the Buttes, Tuolumne and Table Mountain were impregnated with grains and flakes and nuggets of gold. The treasure had evidently been brought down by erosion from veins hidden away in the Sierras, and the richness of the deposit and the quality of the gold varied according to conditions that could not be predicated by the most experienced miner. The whole area was divided, in miners' parlance, into a northern and a southern field; the former stretched from Mt. Shasta to American River, including the Sacramento River and its tributaries and the subsidiary fields along the Trinity and Klamath rivers; the latter ran from Mt. Whitney to Kern River and included two subordinate districts, the Salinas and San Fernando placers. The best-grade ores were found in the central area along the Tuolumne, Stanislaus and Calaveras rivers, and the deposits deteriorated toward either extreme wing. Painted black upon the map of California, this area would look like the shadow of a gigantic bird of prey settling down over the land. Throughout its length and breadth, the region was no-man's-land. With the exception of Sutter's ill-defined grants, all of the territory east

THE SOUTHERN MINES.

of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers was public property and at the disposal of the first comer. Governor Mason had indeed suggested that the land be surveyed into plots of from twenty to forty acres and that these be sold to the highest bidder for the benefit of the national treasury; but there was no force in the country sufficient to execute such a scheme, and no regulation of the mining claims was attempted for many years to come.

Over this unknown field the gold-seekers roamed at will. When the bars along the American and its tributary "forks" were exhausted, prospectors went down to the Consumnes and the Moquelumne, and found diggings equally rich. In 1850 the more restless spirits moved north to the Yuba, Bear, and Feather rivers and south to the Calaveras, Stanislaus,

and Tuolumne as far as the Mariposa. In 1851 mining operations were extended north to the Shasta and Trinity districts. There seemed to be no limit to this gratuitous wealth, and most men thought the supply inexhaustible. They hurried from stream to stream and from bar to bar, always hoping to better their chances of a lucky strike or to hit upon the "mother lode,"—the original vein of pure metal in which every "forty-niner" had profound faith. A vein of gold-bearing quartz was early discovered in the southern Sierras and traced by outcroppings from the Mariposa River north to the Moquelumne. The lucky prospectors had hardly set to work when they received notice that they were infringing on private land! Captain Fremont had purchased from Alvarado a floating grant (conceded to the latter by Micheltorema) to be located somewhere between the San Joaquin and the mountains. The thrifty hero had paid $3000 for the claim, intending to secure pasture-lands along the fertile bottoms of the San Joaquin; but when rumors of the mother lode reached him, he shifted his claim into the foothills. His rights were indorsed by the Jones report and sustained by the Land Commission, and the would-be exploiters of the quartz deposits were forced to withdraw. Las Mariposas grant was a subject of bitter contention, however, for years to come.[29]

The total intake of gold for 1848 was $5,000,000, for 1849, $40,000,000, and the output increased year by year. Butler King, the senator from Georgia who visited the diggings in 1849, reported five thousand men in the field and gave an optimistic augury

for the future of California. One hundred thousand persons found their way to California in the course of 1850, most of them able-bodied miners. William Kelley, an intelligent Irishman who made an extended tour of the mines this same year, gave his conclusions as follows: "The average daily income of the miners, embracing all the diggings, has been computed, by persons in a position to make the calculation, at eight dollars; which, . . . taking good mines and bad, energetic men and slothful, good workmen and those unused to toil, I consider tolerably near the mark. Let me next see the number of days this income can be reckoned on; we first subtract fifty-two Sundays [the miners invariably devoted their Sundays to recreation], and at least ninety-one days for the winter and high-water season, making together one hundred and forty-three days; or . . . [leaving] within a fraction of thirty-two weeks; then all miners allow at the rate of one day in the week for prospecting, seeking new ground, which leaves a residue of one hundred and ninety working days; from which I might and should deduct largely for sickness and other contingencies; but admitting one hundred and ninety days as the yearly average at 8 dollars per day, it yields a total of 1520 dollars, showing that something over 4 dollars per day for the year round is the miner's income." [30] Kelley concluded that a man could do much better as clerk or even as a day laborer at Sacramento, Stockton, or San Francisco, for his wages would be as good and his expenses far less. The usual rate of wages in the Coast towns was $5 per

day, a rate necessitated by scarcity of labor and by the hope, cherished by every laborer, of being able to make a lucky strike, should he go to the diggings.

That Kelley's conclusions were not pessimistic is clear from an investigation completed in the autumn of 1849, but not made public until 1851. Tyson's very interesting and scientific treatise, *Geology and Industrial Resources of California*, was much more conservative than Butler's report,[31] and his conclusions were calculated to dampen the ardor of a novice. "I was irresistibly led to the conclusion, that a very small proportion indeed of those who occupied themselves in collecting the metal *from the earth* were adequately rewarded, whilst the great body of them have done little, if any, more than to support themselves. And yet the severity of the labor, the privations and incidental personal exposure, are unequalled by any pursuit practised in our country. And as a necessary consequence, disease and death prevail so extensively as to bring distress and want upon many a family at home, whose members had been induced to hasten to El Dorado, under the hope of soon returning with wealth in abundance. The chances of getting rich by these means did not appear better than those of the lottery adventurer, who, in general, loses his money without impairing his health." [32] Even Butler King's estimate of the output of 1848 (for the nine months from June to December inclusive) at $5,000,000 would give no higher average than $1000 for each of the five thousand men at work in the diggings,—not a flattering showing when one considers the heavy expense involved and

the back-breaking character of the work. To stand in cold running water, with a hot sun shining on one's head, engaged in a task that strained every muscle in one's body, was a severe test of endurance. "The art of gold-digging," said a man who had tried it, "is unequalled by any other in the world in severity. It combines within itself the arts of canal-digging, ditching, laying stone walls, ploughing, and hoeing potatoes."

The cost of living varied with distance from San Francisco, the means of transportation, and the season. The camps on the American, Yuba, and Feather rivers which could be reached by boat got abundant provisions, though prices sometimes rose to famine height only to drop sharply when a steamer arrived. The diggings on the mountain streams could be reached only by pack-mule, and the supply was very uncertain. In the rainy season the charge for freighting goods to the Stanislaus River was $1 per pound, and the goods retailed at from $1.50 to $3 per pound. Flour sold for $1.50 per pound, pork for $1.25, and boots for two ounces of gold ($20) a pair. On the remote Trinity River diggings, the winter prices were $5 per pound for flour, $4 for pork, and $3 for beans. At such rates few men could do more than make living expenses, the gains of the summer being rapidly eaten up in the six months during which work was impossible because of the constant rains and the flooded rivers. The men who reaped the golden harvest were those who purveyed to the necessities and the vices of the miners. "The storekeeper, or the gaming-house keeper, is the ravenous shark who swallows up all. The majority of the gold-finders, if they

avoid the demon of the [gambling] hells, are at the mercy of the ogre of the store, who crams them first and devours them after. . . . Only in few instances have men been sufficiently fortunate and prudent steadily to accumulate gold." [33]

The well-nigh inevitable effect of the wearing labor, the prolonged excitement, the careless life in tent or brush hut, the insufficient and often stale and unwholesome food, was a physical breakdown. The unaccustomed exposure to heat and cold, drought and wet, brought on scurvy, dysentery, and malaria. An English physician, Tyrwhitt Brooks, who worked in the northern field in 1849, testifies that at the end of the summer two-thirds of the men in the camps he visited were unable to leave their tents. In the autumn of 1849, a hospital was improvised at Stockton for the wrecks of men who were returning from the southern placers, many of whom were crazed by the rapid alternation of success and failure and the desperate chances of the miner's lot.

The mania continued none the less, and the influx of fortune-hunters augmented year by year. The excitement was kept alive by reports of lucky finds, sedulously spread abroad by merchants and transportation agents, and by the romantic accounts of California written by enthusiastic visitors such as Bayard Taylor and W. G. Stillman. Narratives of fabulous strikes and sudden wealth were eagerly caught up by the Eastern press and widely disseminated, while the steamer editions of the California papers were filled with glowing accounts of the riches yet to be unearthed. Only the successes were re-

ported. Few of the thousands of men who returned home poorer than they came, and broken in health and spirits, attempted to relate their experiences.[34] The new-comers were most of them in a credulous mood, ready to be taken in by the most unlikely project. The Gold Bluff fake is an instance. Some shrewd prospectors brought to San Francisco an account of the rich deposits carried down to the coast by the Klamath River and deposited on the beach below its mouth. On the basis of this tale, a company was organized to exploit the promising field, a large amount of stock was subscribed, and claims bought up at a fabulous price. A ship was chartered and equipped with the most approved washers and sluices, and its cabins and deck space were filled to overflowing. Other vessels advertised sailings to the same point. When, all too late, an expert was sent on to inspect the property, the golden sands were reported to bear only an inappreciable amount of "dust." Another bonanza was announced in 1855. Rumors of extensive "bars," unprecedentedly rich, along the Kern River, occasioned a mad rush to that remote region. Good diggings on the Stanislaus and Carson Creek were abandoned, and miners trudged over the three hundred miles of parched prairie beyond the Tulares to the extreme southern limit of the Great Valley. When they reached their goal, strength exhausted and provisions spent, they found that the vaunted placers panned out but poorly, the gold being scarce and of inferior quality. The outraged miners looked about for the originator of the hoax and fixed upon the storekeeper, who was reaping a

rich harvest off the befooled prospectors. A volunteer court declared him guilty of death, and he was promptly hanged and his goods confiscated to the needs of the impoverished community. Not all the promoters of that early day met with so summary punishment, and every steamer brought a new supply of gullibles.

The gold dust accumulated at such heavy cost speedily changed hands, usually finding its way to the men who had not worked for it. Every mining camp was infested with middlemen who levied "a silent tax" (Carson's phrase) on these reckless communities. There were purveyors to need, pleasure, and vice; storekeepers and proprietors of hotels and restaurants, of saloons and gambling hells, bogus physicians and lewd women, all eager to rid the fortunate miners of their gains. Few were the men who had sufficient self-control to resist the temptation to spend extravagantly the gold that seemed so abundant. Placer-mining was in itself a game of chance of the most exciting kind. To stake the day's winnings at the gambling table in the evening was but the logical sequence. "Gambling seemed to be the ruling passion. There was no value set on money, as it would not procure the comforts of life, or amusement, or pleasure to the holders; millions of dollars were recklessly squandered at the gaming tables and drinking shops." [35]

An impartial study of the records of the first decade of the gold fever will prove that not the miners, but the men who had the good sense to stick to ordinary business, made the permanent fortunes. Weber, the

Gold-washing in New Mexico.

Indian trader at French Camp, suddenly found himself the sole dispenser of supplies to the mushroom city of Stockton, and he sent *atajos* laden with gold to the Coast. The man who bought an abandoned steamer, improvised a crew, and carried the gold-seekers and their supplies up the Sacramento or the San Joaquin, — the merchants who sent trains of pack-mules along the river beds and *arroyos*, — the ranchmen who sold horses that had cost them $20 for $200 and fat cattle that had brought $6 in 1848 for from $100 to $200, accumulated solid fortunes. Gold dust sold at the mines for $10 in 1849 and for $16 in 1852; but it was worth still more ($18) at the United States mint. The express companies that were organized to carry supplies to the camps bought the precious metal at the mines, transported it to San Francisco and thence by ship to New York, and reaped a very tidy profit on the transaction. Sutter had an extraordinary chance to build up a fortune and, in spite of his frontier habit of miscellaneous hospitality, made money in the initial years; but he spent it all in defending his title to his princedom on the Sacramento.

It is evident to any one who reads between the lines the history of the "golden age" that the discovery of precious metals is likely to be a curse to the country where they are found as well as to the men who spend strength and fortune in the mines. The men and the nations who ultimately profit by the discovery are those who provide the means of life to the actual workers. This valuable bit of wisdom was early divined by the merchants of the

Atlantic seaports. Consignments of food, clothing, liquors, and patented mining devices were despatched round the Horn. One New York Yankee shipped a number of ready-made wooden houses so constructed as to be easily put together, and sold them to advantage in San Francisco, notwithstanding the enormous freightage (sixty cents per square foot). Australia sent "tin houses," and from China came clothing and boxes of spoiled tea, as well as laborers. The merchants of Honolulu despatched ship-loads of provisions, sugar and beef and flour, even building stone from the coral reefs. The return cargo was not infrequently tons of soiled linen sent to the washerwomen of the Islands to avoid the San Francisco charge of $8 per dozen.

So the finders of the golden fleece scattered their treasure far and wide. The chief gains accrued to Yerba Buena. Other harbors on the spacious Bay had contended for the miners' traffic — Benicia, Vallejo's colony to the north of Estrecho Carquines, and the New York of the Pacific — a mushroom town on the opposite shore; but the half-moon bay which Simpson had chosen for the site of his trading post because of its neighborhood to the farms of the Santa Clara Valley, absorbed the bulk of the ocean trade. Yerba Buena boasted forty families and two hundred inhabitants at the end of the Mexican régime, and the advent of the Mormons in July, 1846, doubled the population. Yet in August of 1847 there were but four hundred and fifty Americans in the place. They adopted the name of the Bay as the name of their town, and proceeded to plan for a

great commercial future such as the devotees of St. Francis had never dreamed. The population in the winter of 1849–1850 was estimated at fifty thousand, and the canvas tents, tin houses, and wooden cabins were scattered all the way from the beach to Telegraph Hill. Hither came the ships from Canton, Honolulu, and Sydney, the steamers from Panama, the swift clippers that made the voyage round the Horn from New York in three months. Here on the broad sands of Millers Point were deposited the crates of clothing and food-stuffs brought from far-away lands. The incoming adventurers must fain spend a few days or weeks in San Francisco before setting out for the diggings and patronize living accommodations that ranged in quality and price from a shack of rough boards on the beach to the St. Francis Hotel, "where you can get good fare and the luxury of sheets for seven dollars per day." [36] Here, too, came the returning miners to spend their money or, more often, to earn enough at day labor to carry them through the winter.

The roadstead between the port and Contra Costa was crowded with ships which, deserted by their crews or unable to obtain a return cargo, lay swinging idly at anchor. Some of these vessels were utilized as living quarters. The little bay was alive with rowboats, scows, and lighters, plying between the inhabited vessels and the shore. The boatmen began by charging a $2 fare, but in so doing they overreached themselves. "Intercourse between the shipping and town is so costly and inconvenient, that judiciously assorted shops, constructed on lighters, ply amongst the fleet, to supply those vari-

ous wants that it would not be worth while to go ashore for at the expense of two dollars."[37] In vain the ferrymen protested against the innovation. Even the day of the floating shop was brief. Already piers were being built out into deep water for the accommodation of ocean steamers, and "submarine lots" were sold in anticipation of the time when the crescent harbor would be filled in from the sand-dunes back of the town. At one of the wharves was moored a thousand-ton steamer, and the owners had fitted her up with offices and storage room. The rental from these shabby quarters brought them in more revenue than the vessel could have earned afloat. The value of real estate was mounting by leaps and bounds. A lot purchased for $800 in the spring of 1848 sold for $8000 in the autumn. The legal rate of interest was fixed at ten per cent per year (1850), but the actual rate ran at three per cent, four per cent, and even five per cent a month.

San Francisco was the creation of the gold craze. The Golden Gate was the natural avenue to the "diggings," for the eastern arm of the Bay led directly to the navigable rivers of the interior, and ship-loads of men and goods were transported on river steamers to the interior towns. From San Francisco, too, the treasure was exported to New York, London, and Canton, and this exportation did not diminish as the output of the mines slackened.[38] Mexican silver, moreover, was shipped to China and East India more speedily and cheaply by way of San Francisco than *via* Southampton.[39]

The richest and most accessible diggings were soon

exhaused, and it became impossible for a group of laborers, no matter how skilful or well organized, to support themselves with shovel, pan, and rocker. Larger companies were organized to turn a river from its bed and expose new deposits or to build a reservoir in some mountain torrent and conduct the water by flumes and ditches to "dry diggings" otherwise unworkable.[40] This necessitated capital, for months must often be spent in bringing the project to completion. Not infrequently a group of men lumped their savings and built a ditch, but the most successful of these undertakings were put through by entrepreneurs who brought in capital and were able to hire labor. Water companies were organized, and the *sine qua non* of placer mining was sold to the miners at from fifty cents to $1 per inch.[41] Such enterprises were highly profitable, paying from four per cent to twenty per cent and even forty per cent per month on the investment.[42] Provided with a steady stream of water which could be used during the dry season and at points remote from the rivers, a party of four men could take out from $30 to $100 worth of gold per day, and could therefore afford to pay $10 per day for water. The "long tom" — an improved rocker — or the sluice was used in the later years of placer mining, and the "tailings" scraped from the cleats at the end of the day's work were subjected to the quicksilver process, so that the minutest particles of gold were extracted. The next improvement, introduced in 1851, was to wash out the "pay" dirt by hydraulic power. One hose and pipe did the work of twelve men, at one-fourth the cost; but an abundant supply of water

under heavy pressure was necessary, and the hydraulic process could be undertaken only by companies with considerable capital.

The next step in the evolution of the industry was the excavation of the quartz rock.[43] The first deep mining was attempted before machinery could be brought to bear. These amateur efforts were called "cayote holes," and the ore brought up was crushed by a roller drawn over a stone pavement, a primitive device introduced by the Mexican miner. As soon as machinery could be got in, shafts were driven and timbered and stamp-mills erected, and the business of quartz mining was well under way.

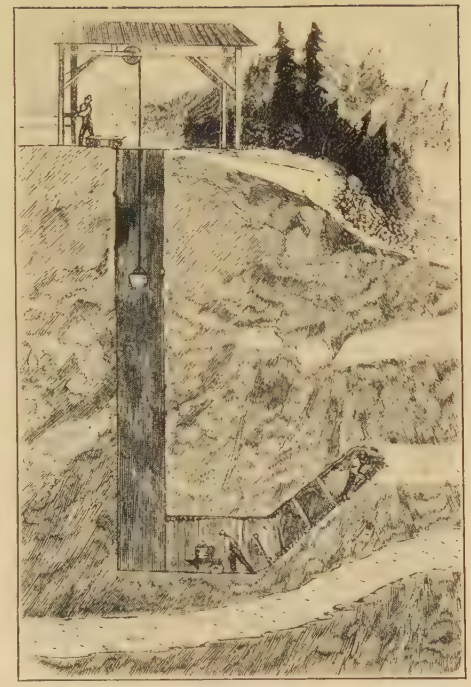
Each step in this evolution meant the increasing use of capital, the necessity for directing and organizing ability, and the subordination of labor. The tendency was bitterly protested by the "forty-niners," who held that the golden opportunity belonged to every American citizen and should not be monopolized. But the day of the self-employed miner was past. "A year or two more will suffice to exhaust most of the metal which is readily accessible; after which, a prize will so seldom be met with, to sustain the hopes of the poorly rewarded gold-digger, that he will find it his interest to work at moderate wages for those who are possessed of the requisite means, skill and knowledge to manage the business '*secundum artem*,' and provide comfortable homes for those whom they employ. . . . When that shall happen, most of the ground which had been previously scratched over will be systematically worked again."[44] Successful quartz mining could not be

carried on, however, until good government and secure titles were assured, wages and living expenses had declined, and adequate capital with appropriate machinery had been brought into the country.

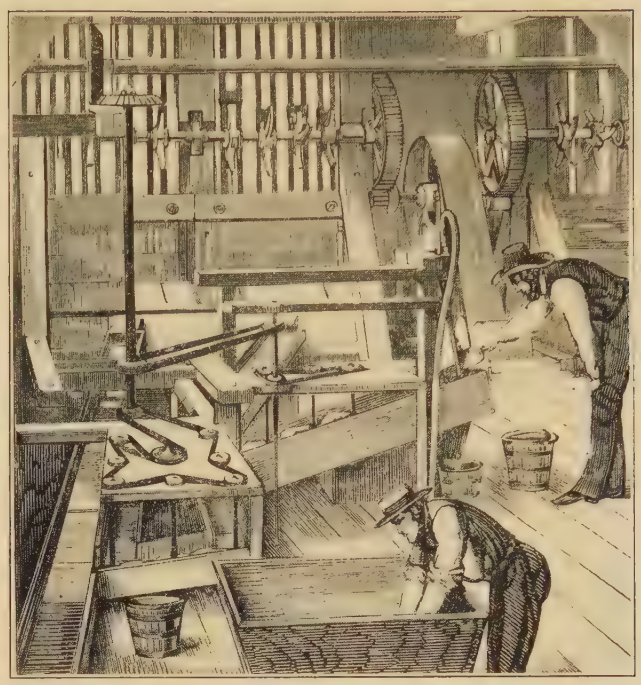
The mining code devised by the men first in the field — whether by unwritten agreement between partners or by the more or less formal conclusions of a miners' convention — was most democratic. The universally recognized principle allowed every man the usufruct of as much land as he could work to advantage, and the dimensions of a claim varied from ten to one hundred feet square according to the quality of the "dirt," the difficulty of working, and the number of miners in the field. The discoverer of the bar was, however, entitled to first choice and to double the usual portion.[45] A man's title held only so long as he worked the claim. A certain amount of earth must be taken out each week, and an absence of five consecutive days might entail forfeiture. The claim, if it proved valuable, was staked out, and a notice of ownership posted; but a tool left on the spot was sufficient evidence of occupation. By 1851 there were notaries at the principal camps, and thereafter titles were officially recorded and might be legally transferred, formal witnesses being required for the validity of the transaction. Originally no man might hold more than one claim; but purchase made possible the ownership of considerable tracts. Notwithstanding the recommendations of Governor Mason and Butler King, Congress imposed no royalty and took no measures looking to the survey and sale of the mineral lands. By 1852 quartz

claims were regulated by the several county conventions. In Nevada County, one hundred feet along the ledge was allotted to one claim, including "all dips, spurs, angles and variations"; in Sierra County, two hundred feet. Each claim was staked and registered, and work to the extent of $100 must be put in every year until the operating company was formed and a stamp-mill costing at least $5000 was contracted for in good faith. Then a deed guaranteeing undisturbed possession was granted by the county authorities. When the United States surrendered to the state of California title to all the mines of gold and silver within its boundaries, these customs were enacted into law. Their democratic provisions lie at the foundation of all subsequent legislation on the part of Congress and the legislatures of the Rocky Mountain states.

The feeling against hired labor in the diggings was originally very strong, and the taking up of claims on behalf of employees was ruled out. The prejudice against foreigners arose in part out of the attempt of moneyed men to introduce gangs, not only of Indians and negro slaves, but of Kanakas, Chinese, and Malays into the field. But the agitation did not stop at hired laborers. No sooner had it become evident that the field was limited, and that there would not be room for all comers, than the American miners demanded that the diggings be reserved for *bona fide* citizens of the United States, and that all foreigners be excluded. In the spring of 1849, there were fifteen thousand aliens in the southern field, — Mexicans, Chilians, and Peruvians for the



Breaking Gold Quartz from the Vein.



Interior of a Quartz Mill, in Grass Valley.

most part. The attempt to drive them out by force and fraud was so far successful that the number was reduced to five thousand before the season closed. The Irish and German miners were even more ruthless than the Missourians in their enmity against "greasers" and Kanakas. The movement extended to the towns, notably San Francisco, where the "Hounds" organized to rid the place of Mexicans and the native Californians, with whom they were confused.

In deference to this anti-foreign feeling of the miners — then the most influential class in the state — the first legislature passed (1850) the Foreign Miners' Tax Law requiring of all miners, not citizens or natives of California, licenses for which a fee of $20 per month must be paid. Non-compliance was punishable by expulsion. This law was repealed in the following year, but a charge of $3 and later $4 per month was substituted. Even so, collection of the tax was not infrequently attended by outbreaks and general disorder. The collectors were paid a commission of ten, fifteen, and even twenty per cent of the proceeds, and they were prone to extort money fraudulently from the weak and defenceless. The fee was rarely demanded of English, Irish, or German miners, but no dark-skinned race escaped. Edouard Auger recounts that some French miners, organized for the purpose of diverting the flow of the Stanislaus River, were driven from the spot by a party of Mormons, and several of them were killed. Borthwick records a similar occurrence on the Mariposa. The effect of this unjust legislation and the iniquitous practices permitted in its execution was to promote anarchy

in the diggings and to drive the outraged foreigners to lawless retaliation. The Mexicans usually refused to pay the fee and abandoned the mines in a body, while the better class of foreigners, notably those with property, were deterred from coming to California. In San Francisco, Stockton, Sacramento, and the mining towns, their absence was felt as a serious check to trade, and the merchants and hotel proprietors as well as the employing class protested that ruin was in store. It was this influence that brought about the abatement of the tax.[46]

Section VII

Financial Depression and the Revival of Normal Industries

As the placer mines were gradually exhausted, the earnings of the miners dwindled year by year. The returns of 1848 were phenomenal, and many of the first comers realized two or three ounces per day for the mining season. Conservative estimates for 1849 give $8 as the average earnings per man per day. This average fell to $6 in 1850, $4 in 1851, and $1 in 1852. It was then generally conceded that a man could earn more at day's wages in any other pursuit. But for the introduction of machinery and the development of hydraulic and quartz mining, the gold fields would have been abandoned perforce. Even so, the total output fell off. It had been $5,000,000 in 1848, rose to $40,000,000 in '49, to $50,000,000 in '50, to $60,000,000 in '51, and $65,000,000 in '53. Then the tide turned. The returns dropped to $60,000,000

in '54 and to $55,000,000 in '55. Since gold was practically the only product of California and had superseded all other exports, this shrinkage of $10,000,000 in two years produced a financial revolution. The number of immigrants sharply declined from 58,000 in 1854 to 29,000 in '55 and 23,000 in '57. The miners who had the wherewithal to pay for transportation left the country,[47] and those who had nothing laid by, flocked to the towns in search of employment. The effect for the merchants, hotel proprietors, saloon, and gambling-house keepers, who had been making fortunes by purveying to the spendthrift gold-diggers, was disastrous.

The sudden collapse of business was felt especially in San Francisco, the center of trade and the focus of all the mad speculation of the past five years. The market was glutted with goods brought in by the clipper ships, and valuable cargoes were sold at a loss or left to rot unsheltered on the wharves. Warehouses and office buildings stood empty, and rentals that had paid from three hundred to one thousand per cent on the original investment, dwindled till they did not meet running expenses. The value of real estate shrank to one-half or one-third, land would not sell at any price, and mortgageors lost heavily. Foreign investors took fright, began to look into their California stock, and faced failure. The rates of interest dropped from five per cent a month to two and three per cent even with good security, and there was a sudden halt in the influx of capital. But a small fraction of the $456,000,000 worth of gold produced in the country between 1848 and 1856 remained

there, and this residue was not available capital, — was not even legal currency.[48] Seyd estimates that of the maximum output of 1853, $40,000,000 was exported in payment for goods, $10,000,000 as interest on foreign capital, and $15,000,000 was carried away by returning miners.

That the more risky ventures should come to nothing was inevitable, but business foundations were shaken by the sudden revelation of fraud and peculation on a gigantic scale. Henry Meigs, a prominent business man who had been involved in the North Beach land speculation, had made use of his intimate relations with the city government to forge vouchers for drafts on the municipal treasury under cover of his numerous street contracts. When exposure became inevitable, he fled the country, leaving debts to the amount of $800,000, and his defalcation involved many of his creditors and indorsers. There were seventy-seven bankruptcies in the course of the year 1854, and the liabilities ran up into the millions. On February 17, 1855, the Panama steamer brought news of the failure of the Ohio and Mississippi Railway, and it was learned that Page & Bacon, a branch of the St. Louis House, had sent home $2,000,000 in gold to stave off ruin. A run on the bank followed, and on February 23 the proprietors were obliged to suspend. The effect of the failure of this leading bank was disastrous. There were one hundred and ninety-seven bankruptcies in San Francisco in 1855, with liabilities amounting to $8,000,000, and few people escaped heavy loss. No failure was so widely felt and so disastrous in its

ultimate effects as that of Adams and Company's Express, founded by Alvin Adams of the Adams Express Company of New York. The firm had agencies in Sacramento and Stockton, and had bought out the local expresses and established messenger service to every considerable mining camp in the northern and southern fields. They had opened a bank in San Francisco and branch banks in the interior towns, and they shipped more gold to New York than any other house in California. The collapse of this mammoth concern ruined thousands of men in every district of the gold fields, and the disaster seemed universal.

The immediate effect of the panic was to prostrate all industry and to produce in the minds of foreign and Eastern investors a wholesale distrust of everything Californian. The ultimate effect was to put all business on a firmer, because more rational, basis. The speculative mania was silenced for the time being; visionary projects for paying high dividends on the basis of unknown mineral deposits and experimental machinery could no longer deceive the public. The idle, vicious, and vagabond element deserted the mining camps and was soon drained off to Australia (1852), Frazer's River (1858), and Nevada(1859), in pursuit of these new opportunities to pick up a fortune without labor. The men who remained in the mines had learned that here, as in older countries, the price of success was hard work and unremitting attention to scientific methods of developing the latent supply of gold. Henceforth the requisite machinery was manufactured in California, more

cheaply than it could be imported, and on models much better adapted to local conditions. The labor no longer needed in the mines was diverted to agriculture, and camp supplies began to be produced at home; bread-stuffs, meat, lumber, beer, whiskey, sugar, shoes, woollen shirts, and blankets were soon turned out, of a quality that enabled them to compete with Eastern goods, and sufficient in quantity to supply the market.

The output of the gold district continued to decline, falling to $50,000,000 in 1858 and to $45,000,000 in 1860. During the decade of the Civil War there was a shrinkage from year to year, till in 1868 the nadir point of $22,000,000 was reached. But luckily for the business men of California, other mineral wealth was brought to light. The Comstock Lode was discovered just beyond the crest of the Sierras, and these rich mines yielded $80,000,000 worth of silver between 1859 and 1869. All the bullion was exported *via* San Francisco, and most of the "bonanza kings" elected to spend their money in the towns about the Bay. Veins of cinnabar had been found in the Coast Range above the Santa Clara Valley by the mission fathers, and a little quicksilver taken out. Alexander Forbes, who succeeded to their rights, had been working the deposits for twenty years, but in primitive and costly fashion. The ore was carried out of the pit in rawhide sacks on the backs of Indians and transported in wooden-wheeled carts to furnaces situated in the valley, where wood and water were available. It was there roasted in chambers formed of trying kettles purchased from the

whalers, and the volatilized mercury was chilled in another chamber of like construction. Forbes' daily output was 328 pounds, and the metal was shipped to Mazatlan, where it sold for $1.80 per pound. Under the American régime, modern appliances were introduced, and the yield at New Almaden increased to 23,740 flasks (75 lb. each) in 1856 and 43,000 in 1864, — enough to supply the demand created by the gold and silver smelters of the Sierras and to admit of large exportations besides. The pools of natural asphalt at Los Angeles had been long utilized by the *pobladores* for smearing the roofs of their houses. The bitumen was now scientifically worked and came into general use. The salt marshes about the Bay furnished another opening for business enterprise, since the long, dry summers were well suited to evaporation.

Possessed of the best port on the Pacific, vis-à-vis to the Orient recently opened by treaty to American trade, the commercial opportunities of California were unexcelled. In 1856, in the midst of the financial depression, her exports, other than bullion, amounted to $4,000,000, and of this sum total, more than one-fourth was made up of bread-stuffs and lumber sent to the gold fields of Australia. Whalers' supplies to the value of $250,000 were despatched to the merchants of Honolulu, while to the British and Russian fur traders in the north Pacific more than $150,000 worth of goods was consigned. The return cargoes — horses and hogs from the Sandwich Islands, ice from Sitka, and coal from Bellingham — proved highly profitable importations. Helper, one of

the disgruntled gold-seekers, had summed up his impressions of California thus: "Her spacious harbors and geographical position are her true wealth; her gold fields and arid hills are her poverty." [49] San Francisco was still the principal port on the Pacific Coast, and its commerce, reduced to a rational basis, bade fair to increase with the development of the resources of the country.

The Panama Railway was completed in 1855, reducing the distance between San Francisco and New York to 5700 miles and the time to twenty-five days. Until the completion of the transcontinental railway, all the passengers and the fast freight from the Eastern states came by this route, and the round-the-Horn voyage was abandoned for all but slow freight. A steamer cleared from Panama twice a month, and was sighted off Point Lobos with the regularity of a ferry-boat. The return steamer sailed on the fifth and twentieth of each month, and for fifteen years "steamer day" was a business event. The preparation of the cargoes, the assembling of the $2,000,000 in gold shipped to New York, the getting ready of the mail for the East, involved an amount of labor that absorbed the energies of half the men in the town. San Francisco was the point at which centered all the industrial activities of the state, and its commerce rivalled that of Boston. It was the terminus of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, the California Steam Navigation Company—a corporation that monopolized the river traffic—the California and Pioneer Stage Company, the Adams and Wells Fargo Express companies. Here were the great banks

San Francisco, Winter of 1849–50.
View from Rincon Point.

San Francisco in 1857.
View from Nob Hill.

and the great commercial houses. The population of San Francisco was one-fourth that of the state, and half the taxes of California were levied upon her property-holders.

Agriculture

Tyson protested that "the proportion of labor employed for digging gold . . . was altogether too great for the true interest of either California or the older states,"[50] and called attention to the agricultural resources in which he believed the real wealth of the country consisted. "If the talents, means, and labor already misapplied in preparations for mining and grinding quartz had been devoted to agriculture and other pursuits adapted to the country, it would have been better for all parties." The gold mania had blinded men's eyes to the surer profits to be derived from producing more useful commodities.

There were a few exceptions. Sutter, for example, hoped to operate his sawmill and supply lumber for the rapidly building mining towns, to harvest his wheat and pack flour to the "diggings," to make up in his tannery and workshops the leather and shoes and woollen blankets needed by the miners. He had a magnificent opportunity, but his well-laid plans were swept into ruin by the tidal wave of gold-seekers. It was impossible to hold laborers to such humdrum tasks, with the lure of the "diggings" close at hand. The grain was left to rot in the fields, the workshops were abandoned, the mills stood idle, the hungry emigrants slaughtered Sutter's cattle, led off his horses, and squatted on his land. His fort proved to be too

far from the Sacramento for convenience, and trade gravitated to the *Embarcadero* three miles below. Disgusted with the ingratitude of the Americans, the some-time friend of the overlanders moved to Hock Farm, eleven miles below Marysville, where he spent the remnant of his fortune in a vain defence of his title. John Bidwell, Sutter's former lieutenant, was more fortunate. He had acquired a grant of twenty thousand acres on Butte Creek and was growing wheat and fruit with marked success. Other American ranchmen located along the emigrant road were making fortunes by selling provisions to the prairie schooners. Eggs were sold at twenty-five cents apiece, milk at $1 per quart, and butter at $4 per pound. The way-worn cattle and mules were bought at bottom prices and fattened for the market. Where the immigrant would not sell, the obliging *ranchero* undertook to pasture his animals at $2 a head, charging $2 additional for insurance against theft. The farmers of the Santa Clara Valley also were busily engaged in "skimming the cream off the diggings." They were raising barley, vegetables, and fruit, luxuries for which there was a never-failing demand in the mining camps. In the San Joaquin the droves of wild horses furnished a short cut to wealth. They were trapped in corrals, lassoed, and driven to the nearest town, where they brought $40 or $50 apiece. Mule teams were worth $300 and fat cattle $30 per head. A butcher's apprentice, Henry Miller of Wurtemberg, arrived in San Francisco (1850) on a German steamer, looked about, and saw his chance to make money. He bought a steer of a Mexican *vaquero*

and opened a meat shop. Other Mexicans brought him more steers, for which he paid $5 apiece without asking where they were found. So he gradually built up a flourishing business. Later Miller fenced large tracts of land along the San Joaquin River and raised his own cattle, always with the aid of the Mexicans, whose loyalty to a patron made them reliable herders, and by an amendment to the Homestead Act exempting fenced lands and swamp lands from homestead entry, he came into possession of great estates rivalling those of the Spanish *rancheros*.[51]

The necessity for transporting supplies to the mines had placed a premium on the raising of horses and mules, for oxen were too slow and cumbersome for the mountain trails. Tradition has it that the California horses were of Arab stock; certainly they had many good points. For herding cattle and for hard riding they could not be surpassed, but they were too slight and vicious for driving or for farm work. The Americans brought in some Kentucky Morgans and some English racing blood; a marked improvement in the breed followed, and excellent roadsters were developed. A few horse breeders imported Clydesdale stallions and produced draught animals of a weight and strength hardly inferior to the English.[52] By 1870 three-fourths of the horses in the state were of mixed blood, not so healthy and enduring as the Mexican stock, but larger, handsomer, and more docile. The mares and stallions still ran in *manadas* or studs, and the animals desired for use or sale were corralled and lassoed and broken to harness by the rough, old-time methods. Since

the range was free and no food or shelter had to be provided, a horse ranch was sure to bring in money.

California was the best of cattle lands. The wild oats that covered the hillsides made an inexpensive natural fodder, little less nutritious than the cultivated oats of the Eastern states. The "filaree" had spread from the south to the north coasts and back into the interior, and furnished a rank, rich pasturage and an ungarnered harvest of seeds that blackened the ground and afforded a much-needed autumn feed. Bunch-grass cured on the stalk in the foot-hills and made an excellent winter fodder. The equable temperature rendered barns unnecessary, even in winter, and pasture land required no fencing, since the law made the owner of tilled fields responsible for this precaution. The mild climate was highly favorable to breeding, and the fecundity of all domestic animals astonished new-comers. Cows, mares, and ewes matured a year earlier than in the East, and bore more frequently. There were, moreover, few of the diseases that afflicted the herds of older countries. Horses and cattle fed on the open range, moving from the valleys to the hill pastures with the advance of the season. Twice each year, once in the spring and again in the autumn, the herds of a given district were rounded up in great *rodeos*. Then every ranchman selected his own colts and calves, branded them and turned them out on the range for another season. The several brands were kept on view at the county recorder's office, and afforded the sole evidence of proprietorship.

The life of the *rancho* did not differ much from that of the Spanish era. The *vaqueros* were, for the most part, native Californians or Indians, and the cattle were of the old long-horned, scrawny Spanish breed. Some blooded stock, Durham and Devon, had been driven across the Plains, and the intermingling had brought up the weight and quality of the animals to a marked degree. Cattle were no longer bred for hides and tallow merely, but for abattoir and dairy purposes as well, and it is safe to say that more fortunes were won from cattle than from gold. The Coast counties, where the fogs kept the pastures green throughout the year, were still the "cow counties," and the dairy interest centered about the Bay; but the ranges of the upper San Joaquin — Fresno, Merced, Tulare, and Kern counties — fed fully one-third of the cattle of the state. Here, during the spring and summer, pasture was abundant, but the fall months from October to January brought serious difficulty. If precipitation had been scant the preceding season, the pasture was likely to fail. Early autumn rains were almost equally disastrous, for they drenched the dried grass and deprived it of nutriment. In either case a considerable number of cattle died of starvation. During the drought of 1858, seventy thousand cattle perished in the south alone. The drought of 1863–1864 carried off between two and three hundred thousand cattle — two-thirds of the herds of the southern counties — and cattle-raising dropped to the second and third and fourth rank in the scale of industrial interest.[53] The native pasturage came to be regarded

as an uncertain reliance, and men who had suitable soil supplemented it by cultivated fodders,—barley, etc. Many of the great ranches were divided and sold to farmers. The mountain ranges were converted into sheep runs.

The conditions for sheep-raising were ideal; the mild winters, the dry lambing season, the abundant mountain pasture, the absence of foot-rot and other diseases, made possible an extraordinarily rapid increase at minimum cost. An annual increment of from eighty to one hundred per cent could be reckoned on. The only serious drawbacks were the burr clover, which injured the wool and enhanced the expense of cleaning it, and the coyotes that preyed upon the flocks and carried off the lambs. It was necessary that the flock should be shepherded by day and corralled at night, but since one Mexican *pastor* could take care of a thousand sheep, this was not a heavy item. There were few sheep in California in 1846. Several flocks were driven in from New Mexico by the early American immigrants, but they were of degenerate breed with long necks and slim bodies, endowed with an excess of horn and a short, coarse, and scanty fleece, and produced but little mutton or wool. The importation of some French and Spanish merinos, also Southdowns and Cotswolds, quickly brought up the standard. The first man to undertake this business began in 1853 with nine hundred ewes. Within ten years he had ten thousand sheep, sixteen thousand acres of land, and other property to the value of $100,000. Wool-growing was, for some time after the drought of 1863–1864,

the most profitable industry in California. The wool was of high quality (selling for twenty-three cents a pound with an average yield of four pounds and two ounces), and brought in a steady revenue. The expense of maintenance on the large ranches was not more than thirty to fifty cents a head, but half the value of the fleece. Fleece and lamb together, a fine blooded ewe repaid eight or ten times the cost of her keep.[54]

Tillage did not keep pace with the grazing interests for several obvious reasons. Timber was scarce, and the cost of fencing cultivated fields against the roving herds of cattle and horses was well-nigh prohibitory. Not till after the drought of 1862–1864 had ruined many of the stock-ranches did the interest of the farmer become dominant in the legislature. Then the free range was curtailed and finally abolished, and the law required that pastures be fenced. The alternation of wet and dry seasons was an unknown and appalling phenomenon to the Easterners. The winter rains flooded the bottom lands and saturated the ground until it would not bear a man's weight, while in the spring months, when Missouri farmers were accustomed to plough and plant, the downpour ceased, the adobe soils were soon baked by the sun, and the time of germination was past. Irrigation, the resort of the mission fathers, seemed to the novices a costly way of making good nature's deficiencies. Not one acre in a thousand of the ploughed lands was artificially provided with water before 1870. Even more preposterous at the then cost of labor seemed the building of dikes to keep

the spring floods from overflowing the river bottoms, although they contained the richest soil. Devastating floods were even more frequent than droughts [55] and wrought greater damage, sweeping away houses and fences and submerging thousands of acres of arable soil. The building of levees along the Sacramento and its tributaries and their extension and maintenance became a definite annual charge which amounted to $1, $2, and $3 per acre. Elsewhere the silt deposits were not by any means so deep or rich as in the alluvial valleys of Ohio, Illinois, and Iowa; the soil was thin, and the accretion of vegetable mould was slow because of the scant herbage and dry atmosphere.

Some of the most fertile lands in the foot-hills had been ruined for tillage by the miners. In their search for gold, they had respected no claims but their own. According to the mining code any land that was suspected of containing "pay dirt" was open to the prospector, and the surface loam was relentlessly scraped off and buried under the sand and gravel of the river beds. In 1855 the legislature took the farmers' interests so far into account as to enact that buildings, vineyards, orchards, and growing crops might not be interfered with; but the wanton destruction of the arable lands did not cease, and many fair valleys were rendered forever useless by "diggings" that returned but a meagre profit to their temporary occupants. Hydraulic was even more injurious to agriculture than placer mining. Hundreds of thousands of cubic feet of débris and "slickings" were carried down-stream, filling up the

Miners at Work with Pan and Long Tom, 1849.

Hydraulic Mining.

beds of hitherto navigable rivers and covering thousands of acres of fertile land. The ruin wrought for the future was incalculable, but so long as the mining interests dominated the legislature, nothing could be done by way of prevention.[56] These circumstances, taken in connection with the high cost of labor, served to discourage tillage in California during the first twenty years of the American occupation.[57]

Corn, the staple crop of the Mississippi Valley, did not do well in the semiarid climate of California, but wheat, oats, and barley had long been cultivated on the Coast, where the prevailing fogs furnished sufficient moisture. Sutter and Bidwell and other farmers in the Sacramento Valley proved that the interior could produce heavy crops wherever a rainfall of twelve to sixteen inches could be relied on.[58] The wheat land was ploughed in the autumn as soon as the November rains had softened the parched earth, the seed was sown in January or February, and the grain harvested in June and July. Pests were abundant. Ground squirrels and gophers gnawed the roots, while grasshoppers, the curse of new countries, sometimes destroyed an entire crop. In the spring of 1855, after a dry winter had deprived them of their usual sustenance, the grasshoppers descended from the hills to feed upon the growing grain, and ate off in a night the season's planting. A dry spring with north winds might blast the tender shoots, and in the southern counties the grain seldom came to perfection for this reason. Here and elsewhere, when there was prospect of a dry season, wheat and oats and barley as well were cut in the milk and stacked to be used

instead of hay for horses and cattle. Experience went to show that, in the north, the rainfall might be inadequate to the development of the kernels for one year in three, and that a killing drought was due every thirteenth year.[59]

Notwithstanding the risks of drought, American farmers were soon converted to the advantages of a dry season for the harvesting of grain. Ruin from rust and mildew was unheard of, and there was no danger of untimely rain. Once cut and bound, the sheaves might lie in the field for weeks unharmed, and the threshing be deferred until autumn, if desired. The hundred-fold return of the early days could no longer be anticipated, but the average yield of twenty to thirty bushels was still far in excess of that in the wheat belt east of the Rockies. Thirty bushels was an ordinary yield for oats and sixty for barley, and good volunteer crops were not unusual. Ploughing was a less difficult matter than in theMissouri bottoms where the breaking up of prairie sod, subsoil ploughing, and harrowing for removal of stones and roots, were necessary preliminaries to the sowing of a crop, and where, because the fields were small and uneven, gang-ploughs were impracticable.[60]

During the Civil War, the Eastern yield declined, and there was a brisk demand for California wheat both at home and abroad. The cattle ranches were brought under the plough and planted to grain, notably in the neighborhood of San Francisco, where droughts were never disastrous and where the costs of transportation were light. Ocean steamers that had hitherto made the return trip in ballast now put into

San Pablo Bay and were loaded with grain and flour at Vallejo. So dry were the flint kernels that wheat might be hauled direct from the field, turned into the hold and shipped round the globe to Liverpool, without risk from must or mould or fermentation. The heavy rainfall of 1859–1861 produced wheat crops that far outran domestic consumption, prices fell to $1.25 per cental, and one million bushels of grain were sent to the English market. The drought of 1864–1865 withered the growing crop and brought the price up to $5.25 per cental. Exportation ceased, there was a rapid fluctuation of prices, and men speculated in wheat as madly as they had speculated in mining stock. The extension of the area planted to wheat, the introduction of machinery, and a more thoroughgoing tillage put the business on a substantial foundation, and in 1867 the export rose to 750,000 bushels. This (1865–1870) was the golden age for the wheat farmer. The Australian crops were short in these same years, and the world's demand for bread was met from the vast interior valley of California. Yet the Nemesis of prodigality was at hand. No land can be cropped for years without rest, rotation, or fertilization, and hold its own. The gang-plough was usually run but four inches deep, and so failed to reach the resources of nutriment and moisture latent in the earth. The shallow soil, unwatered and unrenewed, began to show signs of depletion. The acre yield fell from thirty bushels to twenty, and from twenty to fifteen.[61] In 1871, a dry year, the crop averaged only nine bushels to the acre, and many of the wheat farmers were ruined.

American ranchmen were following the line of least resistance, as their Spanish predecessors had done, and contented themselves with selling raw material and buying finished products, with this difference, that the staple export was now grain, not hides and tallow. A wheat ranch was hardly more profitable than a cattle ranch and even more extravagant, since the wheat ships carried away each year a considerable portion of the nitrogen, silica, and phosphorus with which the soil had been endowed. No attempt at rotation of crops was made; for alfalfa, clover, and leguminous plants required irrigation, and this was too costly for general adoption. In the early seventies the era of irrigation by private capital opened. The revival began in the San Gabriel Valley, where the agricultural achievements of the *padres* were in evidence and where several colonies of Eastern farmers had settled and begun to experiment with various fruits and vegetables. In the neighborhood of Los Angeles and San José, the old mission and *pueblo* ditches were maintained, with some extensions and additions. On the ranches of the interior, mining ditches were utilized for agriculture. The most striking development of irrigation was in the San Joaquin district, where rainfall was less than in the northern valley and the soil more sandy, while the long, cloudless summers were suited to the ripening of tropic fruits. The San Joaquin and King's River Canal and Irrigation Company inaugurated (1872) a system that was to water fifteen thousand acres and proposed an extension that would bring the total area covered to 325,000 acres. The King's River

Irrigation Company built a ditch that could provide for 300,000 acres, while the Chapman, Miller, and Lux Canal had a capacity to irrigate fifty thousand acres of the former cattle ranch.[62] Water was furnished to farmers under the canals at stated intervals and in quantities adapted to the several crops and seasons. The usual water rate was $1.50 or $2 per acre, an annual charge that was fully offset by the incidental advantages of irrigation. It soon became evident that the flooding of a field fertilized the land, while destroying insect pests, gophers, etc.

With an untaxed soil, uninterrupted sunshine, and water furnished at convenient intervals, the experienced American farmers could accomplish marvels. The growing season was double that of the Eastern states, and the size and sweetness of cabbages, squashes, melons, etc., increased in proportion. Sugar-beets bore fifteen tons to the acre with eight per cent saccharine, so that the yield of sugar was twenty-four hundred pounds to the acre. Fruit trees grew more rapidly and bore earlier than east of the Rockies, and the fruit was large and abundant. The flavor of apples, peaches, and cherries was inferior, but the pears and apricots and plums of California were unequalled. A few orange orchards that were planted at Sonoma, Sacramento, and Martinez bore excellent fruit, but the cost of irrigation and the skill and labor required in the care of the trees discouraged production on a large scale. The infrequent orange growers of the south did little more than keep up the Spanish orchards, but they reaped a fair profit on fruit shipped to the San Francisco market. The conditions for grape

culture were ideal. The light, sandy nature of many soils, the freedom from rains or destructive storms during the months between the budding and ripening of the fruit, the absence of phylloxera or other pests, rendered a vineyard an almost certain success. The French cultivators in the neighborhood of Los Angeles and the German colony at Anaheim sent two million pounds of grapes to San Francisco in the season of 1853–1854, where they sold at from fifty cents to $7 a pound.[63]

All the possibilities of soil and climate were not yet known, and many experiments were made at heavy cost, the speculative spirit instilled by the chances of mining days finding expression in the agricultural opening. Sericulture was attempted by certain enthusiasts, who expected to rival Japan and Italy in the production of raw silk and eventually of the finished product. The legislature was induced (1867) to offer premiums for mulberry plantations ($250 for 1000 trees) and for cocoons ($300 for 100,000), and by 1870 the output amounted to twelve million cocoons; but more attention had been given to quantity than to quality, and the product was not marketable. It is said that if all the claims for struggling mulberry trees and low-grade cocoons had been paid, the state treasury would have been bankrupt. Cotton growing was also undertaken and carried to a measure of success at Fresno in the San Joaquin. The seed was brought from Sonora, and the experience of Mexican planters was utilized. The yield was from two hundred and fifty to five hundred pounds per acre, — not a heavy crop, but at the war price of twenty

cents a pound there was considerable profit in the enterprise, since the cost of ploughing, planting, picking, ginning, and baling did not exceed $30 per acre. The necessity for irrigation limited the available area, however, and the laborers for weeding and picking were not to be had. The premiums offered by the legislature (1865) had no lasting effect.

The honey-bee—not native to California—was introduced in 1853, and for a time the prosperity of the small landholder was thought to be assured by the possession of a dozen hives. The long, open summers enabled the bees to store honey during ten months of the year, as compared with six in the Eastern states, and hibernation was reduced to two months. Abundant food was furnished by the fruit trees, grape-vines, clover blossoms, and wild flowers, while in arid sections the sage-brush afforded material for honey of the most delicate flavor. Two hundred pounds was not an extraordinary yield for a single swarm. In 1870 there were thirty thousand hives scattered through the state. But the market for this delicacy was a small one, and many of the producers found they had a glut on their hands. For a time it was believed that castor-beans pointed the way to speedy wealth, and plantations were set and oil mills erected, but all in vain. The plants flourished, but the market was too limited for the maintenance of a paying price. The craze for tobacco growing was equally disastrous. The climate of California was too dry for the proper maturing of the leaf.[64]

The menace of *latifundia* was passing away. With more intensive cultivation, the size of farm holdings

decreased. The ideal of the stockman was the eleven-league grant of the Mexican era, but the great wheat ranches did not contain more than ten thousand acres of tillable land. Proprietors of large estates, finding that they could not get labor with which to cultivate to advantage, were glad to sell off considerable tracts at thirty-seven to seventy-five cents per acre. Taking into account the burden of taxes and the insecurity of titles, land was expensive even at this figure. Irrigation still farther reduced farm acreage. The water companies preferred to rent water to independent cultivators, even when the land under their canals was originally their own, and it was soon evident that a man could do better with fruit or vegetables on ten or twenty acres than with a larger tract. In 1870 one-half the farms in Los Angeles County were between three and fifty acres in size, and with the extension of the irrigated area, the general average declined. After the best lands in the San Francisco basin had been brought under cultivation, the reclamation of the *tule* land about the Bay and along the lower levels of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers became a project of importance. It was estimated that three million acres of rich swamp land, in the heart of the state and readily accessible to navigation, might be recovered by a system of earth embankments at a cost of $5 to $20 per acre. The legislature of 1874 empowered the several districts concerned to issue bonds for the purpose of reclaiming the *tule* lands, and some one hundred thousand acres were drained within the next few years.

Manufactures

The promising beginnings in sawmills, grist-mills, and tanneries made by the American pioneers at Santa Cruz, Yerba Buena, and Bodega were swept into oblivion by the gold excitement. All supplies for the mines and for the tributary towns were imported. Beef and flour came from Honolulu and Sydney, salt was forwarded as ballast from Boston and Liverpool, wine from Bordeaux, *articles de luxe* from China. Even after the gold bubble had burst and men began to look about them for more normal employment, manufactures developed slowly because of certain physical handicaps. Fuel was to be had only at prohibitory prices. Wood was scarce and very costly, and there were no coal mines nearer than Puget Sound. Water-power was abundant in the Sierras, but the Coast Range furnished none that could well be utilized, and the modern methods of transmitting power by electric current were not yet dreamed of. The forests of pine and redwood offered excellent building material, but there were no hard woods such as must be used in the making of wagons, implements, casks, etc. In the first decade of the American occupation, moreover, neither capital nor labor was available on such terms as to encourage manufacturing enterprises. The legal rate of interest was still high, and wages were prohibitive.

The new citizens of California might have been no less content than were the Mexican *rancheros* to remain a raw material producing country, but that their wants were more diversified, numerous, and im-

perative. The machinery needed for quartz mining was too bulky to be sent round the Horn from Liverpool or New York, except at a cost that jeopardized success, while the risks involved in the transport of powder and explosives, matches, nitric and sulphuric acids, imposed an extravagant rate of insurance. Moreover, the stamp-mills, amalgamators, and roasting furnaces suited to gold mining were not made for the coal mines of Pennsylvania or the Black Country, and Californians of determination and energy set about the manufacture of engines and machinery adapted to local needs. Coal was shipped from Australia and from the newly discovered deposits in the Cascades; the wheat ships brought back pig-iron in ballast at cost of $35 to $100 per ton, even scrap iron was utilized; foundries were erected in San Francisco and in Sacramento, and the industrial miracle was accomplished. Stamp batteries and portable engines of California manufacture were on sale in 1855, and wire rope in 1857. By 1860 there were sixteen foundries and machine shops at San Francisco, and mining machinery was being exported to Nevada, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Bolivia.[65] The smelting works built to refine the silver ore sent down from the Comstock Lode were at that time the largest in the United States and received ore from Utah and Arizona as well as from Nevada. Giant powder was imported from Boston and cost $5 a keg, until powder works were established at Santa Cruz (1863). All the raw materials were at hand. Sulphur had been found at Clear Lake, was being mined at the rate of four tons a day, and could be delivered on the coast

for three and four cents a pound,—less than the price of the Sicilian import. Nitrate of soda was brought from Chili and Peru, while charcoal kilns were opened in the Coast Range, where the scrub-oaks and willows were converted into fuel. By 1870 nine-tenths of the explosives used in California were manufactured at home, and a considerable quantity was exported to Mexico and South America. Nitric and sulphuric acids were supplied to the smelters by 1853, and the candles used for lighting the mines—imported until 1867—were thereafter furnished by home industry. No sooner was lead produced in the silver mines of Inyo County than shot towers and type foundries were started. Hemp was imported from Manila, and ropewalks were opened at San Francisco (1856) that competed successfully with the Atlantic Coast producers.

These triumphs encouraged other ventures. The lumber needed for the building of houses, flumes, and sluices had been imported at great cost. For example, five million feet of lumber was shipped to California in 1849 from Bangor, Maine. There was plenty of pine and fir in the foot-hills, however, and water-power was usually within easy reach. Soon every mining town had its sawmill, where Yankee ingenuity introduced labor-saving devices such as levers, chutes, donkey engines, and the circular saw with adjustable teeth. With the increased output, the price fell from $500 to $16 per thousand feet. Adobe construction did not recommend itself to the Americans, and nine-tenths of the new houses in northern California were built of wood. Brick for the more

pretentious business houses was made at Santa Cruz, and some was sent round the Horn. Stone houses were very rare, for no good material had been found within transportable distance, and the little stone used had been imported from China, the Sandwich Islands, and the Atlantic Coast. The cheapest building material was redwood, and the magnificent forests of the Coast Range were felled remorselessly, sawed into planks and boards, and shipped to the towns to be wrought into flimsy houses that were as rapidly swept away by the frequent conflagrations. In the early years the casings for doors and windows and all inside finishings were imported; but later, planing mills were erected, and there was no need to purchase abroad. As the farm area was extended and lumber was required for fences and plank roads, the California supply of redwood fell short, and pine was sent down the coast from Oregon. The first attempt at reforestation was made in 1869, when the Australian gum (eucalyptus) was planted in the Castro Valley. The experiment was highly successful, for a seven-year growth yielded $90 per acre in fuel and telegraph poles. This graceful tree was well adapted to California conditions, for, though sensitive to frosts, it thrives in dry and alkali soils.

The crowded traffic of the mining days created a demand for small river and coasting schooners. The need was first met by the shipyards of Benicia, where many unseaworthy ocean vessels were made over into river craft, and fishing sloops were built for the cod banks of the Alaskan coast.[66] The first sea-going steamer was built in 1864. The need for

HARVESTING WHEAT IN THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY.
Combined harvester and thresher.

stages and ore wagons was met in the same enterprising fashion by the wagon factories at San Francisco, Sacramento, Stockton, and Marysville. Enormous freighters, weighing four thousand pounds and capable of carrying fifteen thousand pounds, and stages fit to stand the strain of rough mountain roads were soon on the market. To meet the demand of the wheat ranches, agricultural implements were manufactured, and machinery such as the multiple gang-plough and the combined reaper and thresher was invented to deal with the vast wheat fields in wholesale fashion. The conversion of wheat into flour on a scale commensurate with the new market early engaged the attention of California entrepreneurs, and steam-power was introduced in the mills at Sacramento, Colusa, and Chico. The best-grade flour was ground at Vallejo and exported to Australia, Chili, and England.

Beef was salted for the mining camps in 1852, and the market was supplied by domestic producers after 1860. Meat packing and the manufacture of soap depended on the cattle industry. After the losses of 1867, the price of hides, tallow, and beef rose, and California manufacturers had difficulty in competing with their rivals in the East. Salt sufficient for home consumption as well as for the packing houses and fish-flakes was provided by 1865. Along the tidal reaches of the Bay, solar evaporation was relied on. At Santa Barbara and Los Angeles boiling vats were used. At Kern Lake and in other arid sections remote from the sea, the brine was pumped from subterranean wells. Borax, discovered

in the salt flats east of the Sierras, was much in demand among the meat packers and brought about twenty times the price of salt, so that the transportation charges were easily covered. The long sea voyage injured the quality of Eastern beers so that the California brew was superior. Hops were grown and breweries built to meet a rapidly expanding demand. A boot and shoe factory was opened in 1863 and, by dint of low-priced leather and the employment of cheap Chinese and convict labor, furnished the coarser grades at low prices, while a few coöperative shops inaugurated by skilled artisans did a thriving business in the higher grades. By 1866 one-fourth the shoes used in the state were of Californian manufacture. Heavy gloves, harness, belting, hose, etc., were also produced.

The revival of woollen manufacture was another happy result of the war period. Bounties on textiles were offered in 1862, $1000 for the first thousand pieces of sheetings, drillings, or cloth. A factory that had been built in San Francisco in 1858 reaped the advantage of this legislation. The best of the wool clip was kept at home, labor-saving machinery was introduced, Chinese laborers were secured at $1.12 a day, and the industry was soon on a solid basis. The Mission Mills, owned by Donald McLennan, made the best blankets in the United States, while other mills furnished the woollen shirtings with which the miners were clothed. The only serious competition was from Oregon, where water-power and a cleaner wool gave the producer distinct advantages. A cotton factory put up in Oakland was less success-

ful, for the raw material — and that of inferior quality — had to be imported from Mexico. The factory was eventually converted to cotton bagging.

Experiments in the making of sugar from melons, beets, and sorghum had been inaugurated in the early fifties, but without much success. Low-grade cane sugar was being produced in the Sandwich Islands as well as in China, Java, and the Philippines. Three refineries were put up in San Francisco in 1865–1866, with a capacity of thirty million pounds. Since the price of raw sugar was thirteen cents per pound and that of refined eighteen cents, the profits were considerable. Before the close of the decade, however, this promising industry was jeopardized by excessive and unregulated production and by the importation of cheap sugars from the Eastern states and from Germany. Claus Spreckels weathered the storm, and his Bay Sugar Refining Company became the largest in the United States.

This extraordinary development of manufactures was of artificial nature. The peculiar isolation of California, intensified by the Civil War which temporarily checked the inflow of Eastern manufactures, and the War Tariff which excluded foreign goods; the buoyant and adventurous character of the California entrepreneur; the anti-foreign movement which drove Chinamen, Mexicans, and all miners of Latin stock to the towns; the bounties offered by the state legislature; — these conditions had induced a hothouse development that could hardly be permanent. With the close of the war, Eastern and European producers began to flood the market with goods

that they were willing to sell below cost in order to regain the lost ground. All attempts to compete in the better grades of leather goods and woollen and cotton cloth were futile. The completion of the transcontinental railway in 1869 put an end to the isolation of the market. Henceforth California's manufactures were of necessity confined to such articles as were too bulky for transportation by rail or for which the raw materials were produced at home or by one or another of her Pacific neighbors.

Section VIII

The Labor Supply

During the first twenty-five years of the American occupation there was a chronic scarcity of labor in California. In matter of fact, there were no *bona fide* wage-earners in the country. Since the discovery of gold, none such had migrated to the Pacific Coast. Moneyless immigrants there were in plenty, American, English, Irish, German; but they had come, practically without exception, not to seek employment, but to make a fortune on their own account in the gold fields, in the gambling-houses, or in the various business enterprises made profitable by the extravagance of the mining communities. They were ready to undertake hard labor and to undergo desperate privations wherever there was any chance of sudden wealth; but for prosaic, humdrum toil, even at assured wages, they had no mind. Few miners accepted employment unless they were "down on their luck," and then only temporarily. During the rainy

season, the great mass of the unsuccessful crowded into the cities, notably San Francisco, and, having nothing laid by, were forced to hire out in order to get through the winter. The majority were unskilled and unaccustomed to steady work. Physically broken, intemperate, cherishing a grievance against any man more prosperous than themselves, they constituted a restless, unreliable, and even dangerous body of laborers. William Shaw describes the conditions in San Francisco in the autumn of 1849: "The winter having set in, thousands were returning sick and impoverished from the mines; the arrival of so many laborers soon affected the rate of wages, and the points [Millers Point] were daily crowded with men unable to get work. As this influx of labor caused a great diminution of wages, the price of provisions remaining the same, discontent and indignation prevailed amongst the lower orders, and nightly meetings took place, attended by crowds of the rabble ripe for pillage and riot, but luckily without leaders. Had an O'Connell arisen from amongst them, order might have been subverted and terms dictated by the mob to the storekeepers and householders; as it was, these meetings ended in furious tirades, forbidding foreigners to seek employment or people to hire them; accusing the foreigners of being the cause of a fall in wages, and holding out a deadly threat to all who dared labour under the fixed rate of payment — ten dollars a day."[67] Millers Point, the labor market of those years, was terrorized by these malcontents. Employers dared not openly offer nor men accept wages lower than those proclaimed

by the mob of unemployed. "Numbers of respectable working-men, who would willingly have worked for a reasonable sum, were almost destitute for want of employment, nigh starving."[68] Violence was not only threatened but actually brought to bear. Employers were beaten and men were killed, and the authorities dared not interfere. An English shipmaster whose crew had deserted, applied to the *alcalde* for aid in recovering the men. He was told that a seaman's contract made under a monarchy was not binding in free California, and there was no redress. Every spring this vagabond horde drifted back to the diggings, leaving a shortage of labor where there had been a glut. The irregularity in the labor supply was accentuated by a no less marked irregularity in the demand, for most of the employments were seasonal, dependent on the rainfall or on unforeseeable local conditions. When a steamer came into port, there was imperative need of draymen and dock laborers; even the Kanakas, the poorest of hands, could get $1 per hour; but the emergency passed with the discharge of the cargo, and for months there was nothing to be done on the docks. When the building craze struck a town, carpenters and brick-layers could command almost any wage; but the boom might last only a few months, and then laborers were forced to seek employment elsewhere. The earnings of the rush seasons must cover long periods of unemployment.

As the placer diggings were exhausted, the broken-down miners hired out to the mining companies, and their wages declined to a living minimum of $3 per

day (1870). The Mexicans and Chilians, driven from the mines by the anti-foreign agitation, found refuge in the towns and were glad to accept wage service. After 1849 there was an unsteady, but none the less evident, fall in wages. San Francisco carpenters, the best paid of skilled laborers, were getting $16 in 1849, $10 in 1851, $7 in 1853, $5 in 1856, and $4 in 1870. The wages of day-laborers fell from $4 in 1849 to $1.75 in 1870, for white men, while in the latter year Chinamen got from eighty cents to $1.25 per day.

Chinese immigration had received little attention in the flush days of the early fifties. The Chinese were but one, and that not the most *bizarre*, of the elements contributed by the countries bordering on the Pacific. Kanakas, South Sea Islanders, Malays, and Hindoos were equally alien to European ideas of what was seemly and intelligible. The other Orientals came and went, making no permanent impression on industrial conditions in California; but the Celestials remained. Five hundred had arrived in 1850, twenty-four thousand in 1851, twenty thousand in 1852, but the number dropped to forty-seven hundred in 1853, and three thousand in 1854, and continued to decline for the fifteen years following. Chinese first appeared in the gold fields, where they worked together in large companies under effective leadership, but using tools so like to children's toys that they excited the ridicule of the sturdy wielders of pan and rocker. The little yellow men were gentle and timid, readily yielding place to the arrogant Americans. They ultimately confined their

operations to the placers abandoned by the others, but such was their patience and industry that, even so, they contrived to get a fair return. Soon they found more remunerative employment in restaurants and laundries; they diked the *tule* lands, converted them into prolific market gardens, and supplied vegetables to the scurvy-haunted mining camps. In the early days the Chinese were regarded as a picturesque and highly desirable addition to the working force of California, greatly superior to the Mexicans and Chilenos and "Sydney ducks," since they were honest, industrious, and law-abiding; but no sooner were the Latin races driven from the mines than economic jealousy and race prejudice vented their wrath upon the Celestials. Against this noncombative people, the foreign miners' license was enforced with special rigor,—the greedy collectors demanding payment several times a month. The burden of this tax, coupled with numerous outrages perpetrated upon them, drove the Chinamen from the gold fields and deprived the employers of sorely needed laborers. A vigorous protest from this interest impelled the legislature to reduce the tax to $3 per month (1852), but in response to the demands of the American and Irish miners it was raised to $4 in 1853 and to $6 in 1855. The unwise provision that the fee was to be automatically increased by $2 each year thereafter, brought about the repeal of this law and restored the $4 rate. The tax was collected from the Chinese miners and from them alone until 1870, when the Federal courts declared it unconstitutional. During the twenty years in which a

foreign miners' tax was collected, the revenue derived amounted to $5,000,000, of which it is estimated that the Chinese, who had no votes and could not testify in the courts, who rarely made use of schools, hospitals, almshouses, or asylums, paid ninety-five per cent. Without this contribution, amounting to half the total taxes levied in the state, an adequate police force and relief of the destitute could hardly have been maintained in California.[69]

Driven from the mines, the Celestials found employment in the towns, — in restaurants, laundries, and private houses. Nine thousand were drafted to Nevada to build the Central Pacific Railway, three thousand went into the shoe factories, cigar shops, and ready-made clothing trade. The Burlingame Treaty (1868) made the coolie trade a penal offence, but provided for reciprocal privileges, — voluntary immigration, exemption from persecution on religious grounds, freedom of residence and travel, right of attendance on schools and colleges, etc. The primary purpose of the treaty, from our standpoint, was to secure to American merchants freedom of entry to a promising market; but the immediate effect was to increase the volume of Chinese immigration to California. In the three years between 1868 and 1871 there were twenty-two thousand arrivals, and systematic agitation against Chinese cheap labor was inaugurated.

PART V

FREE LAND AND FREE LABOR

CHAPTER I

THE CURSE OF SLAVERY

To the planters of Louisiana and Texas, slave labor seemed essential to the cultivation of sugar and cotton. The torrid suns and heavy malarial soils of the Gulf Coast discouraged white laborers, and recourse to negroes was regarded as inevitable. Slaves in plenty were being brought down the Mississippi River from Kentucky and Tennessee or driven in gangs across the mountains from the Carolinas. It was a traffic highly profitable to both sections, since slaves were multiplying beyond the needs of the exhausted lands of the Atlantic states, and the surplus would have been an embarrassment but for the market developing in the Southwest. So brisk was the demand for Northern negroes to make good the loss of life in the unhealthy sections and to supply new plantations, that the price of prime field hands rose from $500 in 1840 to $1000 in 1850 and $2000 in 1860. The temptation to import these valuable commodities was irresistible, and negroes were smuggled in from the West Indies and the Gold Coast in defiance of Federal legislation. During the years in which Iowa, Oregon, Utah and California were being peopled by Anglo-Saxons, Germans, and Scandinavians, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, and even Missouri were supplied with laborers of African blood. The census of 1850 showed that more than

half the population of Louisiana was made up of slaves and free blacks. The proportion for Texas was twenty-seven per cent, that for Arkansas twenty-two per cent, while in Missouri, the northernmost slave state, the colored population was thirteen per cent of the total. Slaves were numerous in the bottom lands along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, but they were little employed in the barren uplands of western Louisiana and Arkansas and northern Missouri.

Frederick Law Olmsted, who made his saddle trip through Texas in 1854, was impressed by this contrast as he watched a gang of twenty-two negroes embarking at New Orleans for some plantation on the lower river, while alongside lay a steamer filled with emigrants and their luggage, bound for the upper Mississippi. "Louisiana or Texas, thought I, pays Virginia twenty odd thousand dollars for that lot of bone and muscle. Virginia's interest in continuing the business may be imagined, — but where is the advantage of it to Louisiana, and especially to Texas? Yonder is a steamboat load of the same material — bone and muscle which, at the same sort of valuation, is worth two hundred and odd thousand dollars; and off it goes past Texas, through Louisiana — far away yet, up the river, and Wisconsin or Iowa will get it, two hundred thousand dollars' worth, to say nothing of the thalers and silver groschen in those strong chests, — all for nothing."[1] The disparity did not end with the original cost. It was evident also in the output of free as compared with slave labor. "In ten years' time, how many mills, and bridges, and

schoolhouses, and miles of railroad will the Germans have built?" and what a market for products of the rest of the Union will they not have developed? Meantime the negroes will have produced several thousand dollars' worth of sugar or cotton which will be shipped north in exchange for supplies without adding anything to the permanent wealth of their new home.

The heavy expenditure for slaves kept the planters continually in debt, so that there were few of them in Louisiana or Mississippi who were not seriously embarrassed. A succession of two or three bad years spelled ruin to all but a fortunate ten per cent. Olmsted thought that the Louisiana sugar planter was at an inevitable disadvantage as compared with his Cuban competitor, since he had to grow the cane under a severer climate. Frost might occur in any one of the winter months, and the lands under the levee were cold and damp, the yield of saccharine was never so heavy, and the "seed" had to be planted every third year. In Cuba the yield was from three thousand to six thousand pounds of sugar per acre, while in Louisiana the average yield was only one thousand pounds. The cost of production, moreover, was double that on a Cuban plantation. Olmsted concluded that the sugar planters of Louisiana were kept going by the two peculiar institutions of slavery and a protective tariff. "I must confess that there seems to me room for grave doubt if the capital, labour, and especially the human life, which have been and which continue to be spent in converting the swamps of Louisiana into sugar planta-

tions, and in defending them against the annual assaults of the river, and the fever and the cholera, could not have been better employed somewhere else." [2] Only the great plantations paid a profit on the investment. The expense of installing a sugar-mill might amount to $100,000, steam pumps for drainage would cost $50,000 more, and the first cost and maintenance of two hundred slaves meant $400,000.[3] Such a lay-out could not be justified except where a large supply of cane was available. The small planters were selling out to the large-scale producers so generally that two hundred estates, or one-eighth the total number, were already manufacturing one-half the sugar exported.

The cotton fields of Louisiana were producing one and a half (400 lb.) bales to the acre, or from eight to ten bales per hand, where the soil was fresh, but the land was soon exhausted, and no effort was made to renew its fertility.[4] The erosion of the hillsides was destroying thousands of acres every year. "If these slopes were thrown into permanent terraces, with turfed or stone-faced escarpments, the fertility of the soil might be preserved, even with constant tillage. In this way the hills would continue for ages to produce annual crops at greater value than those which are at present obtained from them at such destructive expense, from ten to twenty crops of cotton rendering them absolute deserts. But with negroes at fourteen hundred dollars a head, and fresh lands in Texas at half a dollar an acre, nothing of this sort can be thought of." [5]

The cost of maintaining a force of slaves was less

Picking Cotton.

Ploughing for Cotton.
Under the slave régime.

than for the same number of free men. The cabins provided for the slaves were mere log enclosures "without windows, covered by slabs of hewn wood four feet long. The great chinks are stopped with whatever comes to hand — a wad of cotton here, and a corn-shuck there." [6] The rations were coarse and not always abundant, a peck of corn and four pounds of pork a week for each person, with a treat of molasses and tobacco at Christmas. This with the necessary clothing and blankets meant an annual expenditure of $25 per head. (It was usual to allow every family a plot of ground on which to grow vegetables and chickens.) The heavy expenditures were represented in the purchase price of the slaves, — an expense which the unwholesome climate and exhausting labor renewed with alarming frequency,—and the cost of superintendence. Every gang of workers must have a "driver," usually a negro, and every plantation must have at least one overseer. The salary paid an overseer varied from $200 to $2000 according to his reputation for results, — reckoned in the number of bales of cotton or pounds of sugar per acre or per hand. Pressure was thus brought upon the overseer to exploit the land, the draft animals, and the labor force, regardless of the permanent interests of the plantation. "Overseers are not interested in raising children, or meat, in improving land, or improving productive qualities of seed, or animals. Many of them do not care whether the property has depreciated or improved, so they have made a crop [of cotton] to boast of." [7] Few of the landowners of southern Louisiana lived upon their

estates, and the overseers were left to manage or mismanage the property as suited their purposes.

In journeying to Texas, Olmsted followed the great emigrant road from Natchitoches. It could hardly be called a road, being merely an indistinct trail through the pine barrens, along which every rider and driver chose his own path. Emigrant trains were frequently overtaken, — three or four wagon-loads of furniture and farm implements, a light cart or two for the white women and children, and a drove of slaves. "The negroes, mud-encrusted, wrapped in old blankets or gummy bags, suffering from cold, plod on, aimless, hopeless, thoughtless, more indifferent, apparently, than the oxen, to all about them." [8] Their goal was the fat bottom lands of the Trinity and Guadalupe rivers, where cotton still bore three bales to the acre. Much of the land along the Sabine had already been exhausted and was growing up to "old-field pines." The New England observer thought that in eastern Texas a larger area had been abandoned than remained under cultivation, and the empty cabins and wrecks of plantations gave the country a desolate air. All the more enterprising people had moved on to fresh lands farther west, and estates were selling at less than the cost of improvements. Even the cattle ranges were exhausted — the cane and blue-joint grass having been eaten off — and the great herds were being driven to the uplands north and west of the San Antonio Road. For the care of cattle, the negroes had no aptitude, and the herders were usually of Spanish origin.

The cotton planters of Texas were almost all poor, even in the fertile districts where the yield was from seven to ten bales per hand. With cotton selling at twenty cents a pound, the income was considerable; but the outgo was heavy. The bulk of the money went for supplies of food and clothing, for fresh slaves and cattle, and there was little left for luxuries. Most of the planters were living in one-room cabins with mud chimneys. The better sort of dwellings consisted of two log-cabins connected by a roofed-over platform, with at most a gallery or piazza running along the front. Even an old settler had been able to do no better for his family than the one-room cabin. "The room was fourteen feet square, with battens of split boards tacked on between the broader openings of the logs. Above, it was open to the rafters, and in many places the sky could be seen between the shingles of the roof. A rough board box, three feet square, with a shelf in it, contained the crockery ware of the establishment; another similar box held the store of meal, coffee, sugar, and salt: . . . A canopy bed filled one quarter of the room; a cradle, four chairs seated with untanned deerhide, a table, a skillet or bake-kettle, a coffee kettle, a frying pan, and a rifle laid across two wooden pegs on the chimney, with a string of patches, powder horn, pouch, and hunting knife, completed the furniture of the house."[9] The state of the outhouses and garden (wherever a garden was attempted) indicated a hopeless shiftlessness, and it was difficult to find at any of these plantations suitable accommo-

dation for man or horse. There was a general lack of flour, sugar, butter, wheat bread, or beef. The only fresh meat was furnished by the universal hog. The explanation of this general lack of comfort was to be found in the complete divorce between intelligence and labor. Olmsted quotes the comment of a woman who had been brought up at the North: "The only reason the people didn't have any comfort here was, that they wouldn't *take any trouble* to get anything. Anything that their negroes could make, they would eat; but they would take no pains to instruct them, or to get anything that didn't grow on the plantation. A neighbor of hers owned fifty cows . . . but very rarely had any milk and scarcely ever any butter, simply because his people were too lazy to milk or churn, and he wouldn't take the trouble to make them." [10]

Two Ohio men who went up the Missouri in 1854 concluded that shiftlessness was the leading characteristic of life in a slave-holding region. "We were informed by a Missourian, — a citizen of a town of four thousand inhabitants, — that if a carriage axle was bent or broken, it could not be repaired in the place; and we were elsewhere informed, that, throughout the beautiful farming region of the Upper Missouri, so far from manufacturing farming implements, not even a plough could be properly repaired." [11]

The fundamental difficulty with slave labor was that slaves took no interest in their work. The conditions imposed upon them offered no incentive to put forth energy, mental or physical. Every

task was performed under compulsion, and the lash of the driver was a necessary accompaniment of all labor. Farther, the slave had no concern for his master's property. Animals were abused, tools lost or broken, seed wasted. Intensive cultivation, rotation of crops, conservation of the soil, were all impossible under a régime that offered no reward for fidelity and ingenuity. Depletion of the land was, by consequence, rapid and universal. Even the black loam of the river bottoms was sapped of its fertility. Southerners of the more intelligent type recognized the fatal defects of slave labor and would have been glad to be rid of its risks and responsibilities; but emancipation seemed to involve worse evils. All observers agree that the condition of the freed blacks was, in general, inferior to that of the slaves; for these were sure of food and clothing, at least, and were guarded against liquor and vagabondage. The various attempts to emancipate and transport the negroes had come to little, and yet some provision must be made for the increase of the African population. In the minds of the leading Southern statesmen, there was but one solution of the dilemma, new territory to which slave owners might migrate with their working force. The progressive exhaustion of the old soils must be made good in fresh lands suited to the slave economy. Directly west, nature had raised a physical barrier in the "staked plains" of Texas and the arid wastes of the upper Arkansas, but to the north lay the Great Plains, a region that was just coming to public notice as having an agricultural future.

CHAPTER II

SLAVERY IN THE TERRITORIES

All explorers of the Great Plains, the vast moorland stretching from the one-hundredth parallel to the Rocky Mountains and from the Arkansas River to the British boundary, had expressed the conviction that the region was unsuited to settlement. Pike and Brackenridge, Long and Gregg, were convinced that — treeless except along the watercourses, with inadequate rainfall and unpromising soil — the Plains were not adapted to agriculture. As late as 1856 Colonel Emory stated in an address to the Association for the Advancement of Science: "Except on the borders of the streams which traverse these plains in their course to the valley of the Mississippi, scarcely anything exists deserving the name of vegetation. The soil is composed of disintegrated rocks covered by a loam an inch or two in thickness, which is composed of the *exuviæ* of animals and decayed vegetable matter. The growth on them is principally a short but nutritious grass, called buffalo grass. A narrow strip of alluvial soil, supporting a coarse grass and a few cottonwood trees, marks the line of the watercourses; which of themselves are sufficiently few and far between. Whatever may be said to the contrary, these plains west of the one hundredth meridian are wholly unsusceptible

of sustaining even a pastoral population until you reach sufficiently far south to encounter the rains from the tropics." He thought most people had been misled by "estimating the soil alone, which is generally good, without giving due weight to the infrequency of rains, or the absence of the necessary humidity in the atmosphere to produce a profitable vegetation." For a century to come, the scientists were assured, civilized man would cling to the alluvial lands of the Mississippi and Missouri valley, relinquishing the prairies to the nomad Indian tribes, to whom, because of the abundance of game, they were a terrestrial paradise. In pursuance of this theory, the government had located here the reservations of the Delawares, Wyandottes, and other tribes removed from east of the Mississippi. It was a tenantless land crossed by the caravans of the Santa Fé traders and by emigrant wagons bound to Utah, Oregon, or California. The pioneers thought of the Plains much as European emigrants thought of the Atlantic, as an unfortunate barrier between the old home and the new which must be traversed at serious cost in time and hardship. The only exception, so far as the overlanders knew, was the valley of the Kansas River, where the rich growth of grass and flowers gave some indication of future productivity.

The attention of Congress was first called to the latent possibilities of Nebraska Territory by Stephen A. Douglas, senator from Illinois, who hoped to develop the region in the interests of a northerly route for the much-discussed railway to the Pacific. In 1844, in 1848, and again in 1852, he introduced

bills proposing territorial organization. The last measure incorporated Dr. Whitman's suggestion that military stations be planted along the overland trail where food might be raised and sold at prices that would render the posts self-supporting. Soldiers were to be provided by the enlistment of such volunteers as might be attracted by a land bounty of six hundred and forty acres, awarded for a three years' term of service. The proposition to open this territory to settlers aroused unwonted interest, not because of the known resources of the country involved, but because the question of the extension of slavery was reopened.

The Missouri Compromise had fixed upon 36° 30′ as the boundary between slave and free territory, but the admission of California as a free state seemed to abrogate this agreement. The provision that New Mexico and Utah were open to slave labor was but a barren victory for the South, since these arid lands were not suited to wholesale cultivation. Under existing conditions it was inevitable that free states would be created so rapidly as soon to overthrow the balance of power in the Federal government on which the continued existence of slavery was held to depend. There was but one resource for the determined supporters of slavery, — the opening of new slave territory north of the Missouri Compromise line. The Kansas-Nebraska Bill, introduced into the House of Representatives in 1854 by Stephen A. Douglas, now chairman of the Committee on Territories, declared this compromise unconstitutional and therefore "inoperative

and void" and announced the new principle of non-intervention. The people of a territory, and they alone, were competent to determine what labor system should prevail among them. Congress could do no more than organize such territories "with or without slavery as their constitution may prescribe at the time of their admission." In spite of the energetic opposition of the Free Soil party and of such Democrats as Thomas H. Benton, who held that the Missouri Compromise was a pact that could not honorably be broken, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was carried through both houses and received the signature of President Pierce on May 30, 1854. Thus was it determined that the momentous question whether slave or free labor was to dominate the West was to be tried out on the ground, and that victory would rest with the section that could furnish the most successful colonizers. The Territory of Kansas was delimited at the fortieth parallel and opened for settlement, the Indian tribes being removed.[1]

Popular Sovereignty

The free state men accepted the challenge. Eli Thayer, a member of the Massachusetts General Court, brought forward a plan that gave new hope to the baffled opponents of slavery. The rich lands of Kansas must be colonized with men from the North, — men who could be counted on to cast their votes, when the test came, against the extension of the hated institution. On April 26, 1854, more than a month before the signing of the Kansas-

Nebraska Act, he induced the legislature of Massachusetts to incorporate the Emigrant Aid Company, and readily secured the aid of Amos A. Lawrence and other business men of Boston in getting together a capital of $140,000. His Plan of Freedom was entirely pacific and offered a means of circumventing the slave power without any violation of the law or the Constitution, — without menace to the Union. It enlisted the cordial support of the best men in New England and the North. Edward Everett Hale, Horace Bushnell, Theodore Parker, the Beechers, and thousands of lesser clergymen lent their pulpits and their voices to the propaganda. Edward Everett Hale was one of the first and ablest of Thayer's assistants. He had written a pamphlet in 1845 (apropos of the Joint Resolution for the annexation of Texas), proposing to colonize Texas with men from the free states; but his appeal fell on deaf ears. The odds were then too heavily against the antislavery men. The *Boston Daily Advertiser*, the *New York Tribune*, the *New York Evening Post*, the *Springfield Republican*, and hundreds of local papers throughout the free states printed vigorous editorials in behalf of "the Kansas Crusade" and eagerly reported the course of events. Eli Thayer threw himself into the campaign heart and soul, addressing audiences that crowded the churches and lyceum halls from the Penobscot to the Schuylkill. Farther west, Cincinnati and Oberlin furnished men who carried the propaganda throughout the Old Northwest. An emigrant aid company was organized in New York City, another

at Albany, and another in Washington, and Kansas leagues were formed in hundreds of smaller towns. Young men from the hill towns of New England, from the exhausted farms of New York and Pennsylvania, from the malaria-haunted prairies of Illinois, enlisted for the free-soil crusade, actuated by the desire to better their own condition as well as to contribute their share toward checking the spread of slavery.

The advantages of emigration on a large scale were soon evident. On the understanding that twenty thousand people would move to Kansas within three years, the new railways that were competing with the Ohio steamers for the Mississippi River traffic offered reduced rates, and a fare of $37 from Boston to Kansas City was arranged. A receiving station was opened at St. Louis, a hotel was purchased at Kansas City, and agents were despatched to the several points of transfer to guard the emigrants against extortion and fraud. Town sites were chosen and desirable lands designated by men familiar with the territory, machinery was purchased and forwarded at the cost of the Company, — a sawmill being set to work at every point where a colony was projected, — gristmills and printing-presses followed, and $2000 was contributed to the financing of the first newspaper, the *Herald of Freedom*.[2]

Charles Robinson, a "forty-niner" who had led the squatters' rising in Sacramento, was the very effective agent in the field. Charles H. Branscomb took charge of the emigrant parties, while Samuel C. Pomeroy served as financial agent at Kansas City.

The first group of twenty-nine men left Boston, July 17, 1854, going by rail to Buffalo. Their journey was a triumphal progress. At every station they were met by crowds who cheered the advance-guard of the army of freedom, and the local press chronicled their movements day by day. At Buffalo, they transferred to the steamer *Plymouth Rock* and crossed Lake Erie to Detroit. Thence the railroad carried them to Chicago and to Alton, where they boarded river boats for Kansas City. There Branscomb took the party in charge and led them up the Kaw River to the site of Lawrence. A second party of sixty-six men followed in August, and five companies with seven hundred and fifty emigrants went in the course of the year. Each party doubled and trebled its numbers *en route*, and many went out quite independently of the New England Emigrant Aid Company. The books of the Boston office showed during the course of the first three years of its operation three thousand names of prospective emigrants,— intelligent and resolute men for the most part, ready to die if need be for the sake of the principle on which they had risked their personal fortunes. Most of these men could write and write effectively, and their letters home, eagerly awaited and read at the village post-offices, at church meetings and lyceums, or printed in the columns of the anti-slavery press, fired the enthusiasm of thousands more. After 1856 there was no more need for the emigrant aid societies. The colonists organized on their own account and moved on Kansas by thousands; for it was coming to be understood that the once despised

Plains comprised some of the best farming country in the West.

Boynton and Mason, the commissioners sent out by the Kansas League of Cincinnati in the autumn of 1854 to inspect this latest "new land of promise," thought the soil of eastern Kansas as fertile as that of Missouri and the rainfall of thirty inches quite adequate for agriculture. The arid plains of the central section were covered with buffalo grass, the best of pasturage, and the rivers that traversed the district from west to east afforded a sufficient water supply. Here was an admirable cattle country, while the mountainous region bordering on the Rockies would furnish water-power only comparable to that of New England. Forest growth on the uplands was kept down by prairie fires, which must cease to be dangerous as the land was brought under cultivation; but along the streams there was abundant timber for immediate need. A treeless country had its advantages, since the cost of clearing land was slight, and the plough met no obstacles in turning over the sod. Building material for all time was provided in the underlying strata of lime and sandstone, while the outcropping ledges of coal promised fuel for the future. The osage orange furnished an admirable hedging plant which formed a hog-proof barrier in three years' growth. For house-building, a temporary expedient that gave warm shelter was prairie sod or sun-dried brick such as the Mormons were using. "In three years after locating upon the open prairie, a man may have his farm surrounded and divided by hedges; his dwelling adorned with

shrubbery, and young shade trees — several kinds of fruit trees and grapevines in bearing — and if he pleases, a young forest, already capable of supplying him with some small timber." [3]

The cost of taking up land under the pre-emption law was moderate — $1.25 per acre — and the first ploughing could be accomplished, even when men and teams were hired, at charge of $2.25 per acre. The prairie soil might be counted on to produce from fifty to one hundred bushels of corn, forty bushels of oats, twenty bushels of wheat, two hundred bushels of potatoes, or one thousand pounds of hemp per acre. The value of hemp was $120 per ton, and it was already a staple export from northern Missouri. An excellent market for all food-stuffs, as well as for cattle and horses, was provided by the emigrant trains to Oregon and California and the caravans that still went over the Santa Fé Trail. Boynton was convinced that Kansas would never be a slave state. The crops to which by soil and climate its agriculture was adapted — corn, wheat, oats, cattle — were not suited to slave culture, nor was the quarter-section farm consistent with slave economy. Emigration, moreover, follows parallels of latitude, and few Southerners would care to face the severe winters of the Platte Valley. The people who came into Kansas from Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri were usually "poor whites" who brought no slaves. Planters did not care to risk so valuable a property in a territory from which slavery might ultimately be debarred.

Kansas was the poor man's opportunity. To take

advantage of the preëmption law, a man must swear that he held no other claim and owned no more than three hundred and twenty acres of land elsewhere. In order to secure his title, he must prove that he had built a house upon his claim and "improved and inhabited" the land for at least one year. Since the lands of the Kaw Valley had not yet been surveyed by the government, settlers would have fully two years in which to accumulate the $200 due the land office. The Emigrant Aid office estimated that a man did not need more than $100 to start with.

In the autumn of 1854, there were several steamers plying on the Missouri between St. Louis and Weston, the then depot for the emigrant and Santa Fé trade. The voyage was still a precarious one and taxed the ingenuity of boat-builders, as is evidenced by Boynton and Mason's description of their steamer. "The boat is provided with heavy spars some fifty feet long, which are set out over the sides, like the legs of giants, and by means of the proper machinery, worked by the capstan, the weight of the boat is partly suspended upon her legs, and she *literally* '*walks* the water like a thing of life.'" [4] The journey to Kansas City, the new post at the mouth of the Kaw River, required three or four days and cost $12 (cabin passage). Freight rates were $1.50 per hundredweight in the fall when the water was low. In the spring, when the Ohio Rivers boat could run up the Missouri, competition brought the rate down to twenty-five cents per hundredweight. Kansas City was a prosperous village of from six hundred to one thousand inhabitants. Lying at the junction

of two navigable rivers, and possessing the rare advantage of a high bluff and a "natural limestone wharf," it had the chance of becoming the com-

THE KANSAS SETTLEMENTS, 1855.

mercial outlet for a great farming region and was already contending with Weston for the emigrant trade. Farther up the Missouri and on the western bank was Leavenworth, a squatter settlement where twelve hundred Missourians had staked their claims in the heart of the Delaware reservation, in defiance of the United States authorities. "There was one steam-engine, naked as when it was born, but at work, sawing out its own clothes. There were four tents all on one street, a barrel of water or whiskey under a tree, and a pot, on a pole over a fire. Under a tree, a type-sticker had his case before him, and was at work on the first number of the new paper, and within a frame, without a board on side or roof, was the editor's desk and sanctum."[5] When the Cincinnati commissioners came down the river a few weeks later, the editor had removed his

office to the "corner of Broadway and the levee." Lawrence was hardly more imposing, being a "city of tents," although its population was made up of six hundred heads of families. Emigrants from New England did not often bring their women and children, fearing to expose them to the hardships of the first winter. All the best land in the Kaw Valley as far as Fort Riley was already preëmpted, since this was regarded as the most favored portion of the territory. The steamers and flatboats that ran up the river as far as the Fort when the water was high afforded the all-important transportation facilities. Here was Topeka with four hundred inhabitants and a town site of two square miles. Two steam sawmills belonging to the New England Emigrant Aid Company were sawing out lumber for the house-builders at $10 per thousand feet. A printing-press was already set up, and the Company's store was selling food-stuffs at less than market prices. The Boston philanthropists were doing for this frontier what Dr. McLoughlin had done for the Oregon emigrants and what the Mormon church was still doing for its protégés. "It strips emigration of its terrors, and renders the settling of a new country a safe, easy and profitable operation, even for the pioneers." [6] The scheme of emigration differed from that undertaken by the Mormon church in that every emigrant paid his way, made his own choice of location, and laid claim to land on his own initiative. He was not even under expressed obligation to use his vote or his influence against slavery.

Meantime the slave interests had not been idle.

Organized emigration had long been customary in the South. For forty years, slave owners had been sending younger sons and superfluous slaves westward — to Georgia, to Mississippi, to Texas — with the full assurance that they could occupy and dominate the new territories. But migration northward, into a region where not cotton and sugar, but corn, wheat, and oats would be the staple crops, was a far more difficult matter. Slave labor might not prove profitable, and free laborers were not to be had for such a venture. The issue was clearly foreseen. The *Charlestown Mercury* announced: "If the South secures Kansas, she will extend slavery into all the territory south of the fortieth parallel of north latitude, to the Rio Grande, and this, of course, will secure for her pent up institution of slavery an ample outlet, and restore her power in Congress. If the North secures Kansas, the power of the South in Congress will gradually be diminished, the states of Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Texas, together with the adjacent territories, will gradually become Abolitionized, and the slave population, confined to the states east of the Mississippi, will become valueless. All depends upon the action of the present moment." [7] Certain Southern patriots responded to this plea. Major Buford of Alabama recruited a party of three hundred adventurous young men and paid their expenses for a year's campaign, on the understanding that each volunteer would make over half of his squatter's claim to the financier of the expedition. The Lafayette Emigration Society was set on foot in Missouri on terms somewhat less thrifty.

There was, however, no considerable migration from the slave states except from the region that lay directly east of Kansas. In the frontier communities of northern Missouri, there were plenty of reckless spirits — broken-down trappers, disappointed gold-seekers, seedy veterans of the Mexican War — eager to move across the border and lay claim to any promising land, regardless of Indian reservations or pre-emption rights. In the autumn of 1854 they flooded the Kansas Valley, planting stakes and registering claims wherever a colony of free state men was projected.[8] Speculators and blackmailers joined in this attempt to dispossess the men who had first filed on the land and who, by settling thereon, had given it market value. The policy of Robinson, derived from his California experience, was to induce his men to ignore bullying, to stand by their civil rights and wait for the law to take its course. It took courage to adhere to this programme, since the Missourians were known to be unscrupulous as to the means used, and the Federal government, with Pierce in the presidential chair and Jefferson Davis secretary of war, could not be relied on for abstract justice; but the law-abiding element possessed their souls in patience, for they believed that regard for constituted authority — as essential to the ordered development of society as is self-control in the individual — must prevail in the end.

By the autumn of 1854 there were eight thousand people in Kansas, fully half of them from the free states. Since the great majority of the Northern immigrants were adult men, it was thought this

element could outvote the pro-slavery faction by five to one.[9] Unable to settle the country as rapidly as the free state men were doing, the proslavery leaders determined to control the elections. Blue lodges and other secret societies were organized for this purpose, under the direction of General D. O. Atchinson, senator from Missouri, and no effort was made to conceal their intention. Bands of "border ruffians" rode across the Missouri line,—daring, lawless men, imbued with the individualistic creed of the frontier. They distributed their force among the several voting districts so as to make sure of swamping the antislavery majority at every point.

At the election of the territorial delegate (November 29, 1854), Whitfield, the proslavery candidate, received an overwhelming majority of the votes cast, but more than half the number (1721) were afterward proven to be illegal. A much more important issue was the choice of the territorial legislature in the spring of 1855, for on its enactments would depend the future of Kansas. Again armed bands rode across the border, each equipped with camping outfit, and when they returned home immediately after the election, they were received with addresses of congratulation by their fellow-townsmen at Franklin and elsewhere, for they had insured a proslavery majority.[10]

When Governor Reeder, who had at first accepted the result of the election, found this assembly unmanageable and repudiated its action, he was removed from office by President Pierce, and Governor Shannon was sent to take his place. So supported, the legislature

proceeded to draw up a constitution for the Territory closely modelled upon that of Missouri, but even more drastic in respect to the opponents of slavery. The death penalty was awarded for the crime of aiding in the escape of a runaway slave, imprisonment at hard labor for writing, speaking, or printing antislavery arguments, and antislavery opinions were declared to be sufficient ground for disfranchisement. The effect of these high-handed proceedings was to rouse intense enthusiasm for the crusade in behalf of freedom throughout the North and to induce the immigration of some fanatic abolitionists. The proslavery zealots, meanwhile, policed the Missouri, inspecting the steamboats, turning back passengers who haled from north of the Ohio River, and confiscating their luggage.

The Wakarusa War

The free state settlers justly regarded the constitution and laws adopted by an assembly illegally elected as void and without effect, and they proceeded to hold a convention at Topeka to draw up a state constitution. This was submitted to the people (December 15, 1855) and carried 1731 to 46. Dr. Robinson, who headed the antislavery ticket, was triumphantly elected governor. Thus there were two governments in Kansas, the territorial and the state, neither of which could claim to be constitutional. The conflict of authority, or rather the lack of all authority, gave opportunity for theft, murder, and arson, and the inevitable recriminations. A belligerent proslavery sheriff, Jones, attempted to arrest an

old man whose only offence was his concern for the body of a murdered friend; but he was rescued by some of the free state men, who protested the sheriff's authority. The Missourians reënforced Jones' posse by seventeen hundred armed troopers and marched on Lawrence determined to make an end of the hated town. Hostilities were averted by the personal intervention of Governor Shannon, who patched up a truce and reluctantly conceded the right of the men of Lawrence to defend themselves; but Robinson and several other antislavery leaders were arrested and kept under guard by the Federal troops.

In the spring of 1856 a Congressional investigation was ordered. The majority report (two Republicans to one Democrat) was to the effect that the territorial legislature was illegally elected, and its acts were therefore void; that the convention which drew up the Topeka constitution represented a majority of the people, but was illegally called.[11] A new election was ordered for the autumn of 1857, and United States troops undertook to maintain peace until the civil authority was established.

All might have gone well but for the Pottawatomie outrages. John Brown and his five sons came to Kansas in the summer and autumn of 1855 and settled at Osawatomie. They were extreme abolitionists and held that slaveholders must be driven from the territory, if not by votes, then by force; but their propaganda was distrusted by Robinson and the Lawrence men, who believed that extra-legal means would be fatal to their cause. Aroused to a pitch of frenzy by the appearance of armed bands of Missouri-

ans and the attack upon Lawrence, Brown led his men into the valley of the Pottawatomie, a proslavery district, and there they dragged five suspects from their beds and killed them without shadow of trial or legal authority. This horror precipitated a campaign of revenge in which both parties participated, and the governor was obliged to resort to martial law. Immigration was checked, and the favorable impression created by Robinson's policy of non-resistance was largely negatived. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a young divine of Worcester, Massachusetts, who was escorting a party of emigrants over the toilsome and costly route through Iowa and Nebraska, met parties of Kansas settlers returning home. "'Will you give up Kansas?' I asked. 'Never,' was the reply from the bronzed and bearded lips, stern and terrible as the weapons that hung to the saddle-bow. 'We are scattered, starved, hunted, half-naked, but we are not conquered yet.'"[12] Douglas, on the other hand, denounced "that vast moneyed corporation," the Emigrant Aid Company, as primarily responsible for the failure of popular sovereignty to settle the slavery question in the territories; but wiser men than he were forced to the conclusion that the peaceful solution of an antagonism so irreconcilable was impossible.

In 1857 immigration again set toward Kansas, the Northern men usually coming by the way of Iowa and Nebraska to avoid the annoyance of passing through St. Louis, Franklin, and Kansas City. Some enterprising antislavery men started the town of Quindaro and announced it as the only landing on the river

where free state immigrants were sure of a welcome. In consequence, all the immigration set that way, and the other landings had to advertise equal hospitality or see their trade languish. When the elections were held in October, 1857, the free state party was confessedly in the majority, twenty to one; but the determined advocates of slavery falsified the returns. The proslavery vote from small villages and sparsely populated townships was so large that the fraud was patent, and the returns were disallowed by Governor Walker, to Pierce's extreme annoyance. But fraud could not make permanent headway against the will of the people, and violence had only the effect of sending larger companies of antislavery colonists across the Missouri. Kansas was ultimately won for free labor, as Oregon and California had been, by the incoming of settlers who had no use for slavery. In 1859 an antislavery constitution was adopted by an uncontestable majority of the voters, and the attempt to create a slave state north of the Missouri Compromise line was abandoned.

Beaten on ground of its own choosing, the slave oligarchy repudiated the theory of popular sovereignty altogether and endeavored to substitute the principle that slave property had equal rights with any other property, and that the Federal government was bound to defend its possessor in any state or territory to which he might transfer it. Meantime the men who were convinced that farther compromises with the slave power would jeopardize the continuance of free institutions had organized the Republican party. The convention held in the summer of 1856

announced that no interference with the institutions of existing states was proposed, but that the extension of slavery to the territories must cease at once and for all time.

In the presidential election of November, 1856, the Republicans cast 1,341,264 votes and carried eleven of the fifteen free states; but Buchanan, the Democratic candidate, secured the majority of the electoral college. However, the tide of popular indignation against the aggressions of slave owners was steadily rising. The Dred Scott decision and the open importation of slaves from Africa, in violation of a pact in the original constitution, added fuel to the flame. In the elections of 1860, Abraham Lincoln, the consistent opponent of Stephen A. Douglas, received a popular vote of 1,866,452, and a clear majority of the electoral college. His election was the signal for the secession of the slave states and the war for the preservation of the Union. The pro-slavery majority in the Senate disappeared with the withdrawal of the Southern members, and Kansas was finally admitted to the Union under the constitution indorsed by its people.

The rapid development of the state under a free labor system was a sufficient justification of the long struggle. Samuel Bowles, who crossed the Plains by stage in 1865, described the country east of Fort Kearney as beautiful prairie, "illimitable stretches of exquisite green surface, rolling like long waves of the sea," with here and there a ranch or a farm with cultivated land. The proprietors were using mowers and reapers "to an extent that would amaze New

England farmers." [13] The great need of Western agriculture was a steam plough which would convert the level, treeless plains into tillable soil with less expenditure of time and labor. Farther west the ranchmen were discussing the practicability of dry farming. "By ploughing during the latter rains of Spring, and sowing during the long, dry Summer rest, the smaller and hardy grains will sprout with the Fall rains, strengthen with the Winter and quickly ripen in the early Spring. Such treatment involves a years fallow, as the harvest would be too late for another ploughing the same Spring." [14]

CHAPTER III

THE VICTORY OF THE NORTH

The settlement of the slavery question aside, the most significant results of the Civil War for the Far West were the chartering of the Union Pacific Railroad Company and the Homestead Act.

The Railroad to the Pacific

The first suggestion for transcontinental transportation seems to have been that submitted to Congress by Robert Mills in 1819. He proposed that Charleston, South Carolina, be connected with the Pacific Ocean by a system of canals and natural waterways, up the Mississippi and Missouri to the Great Falls, and "thence passing through the plains and across the Rocky Mountains to the navigable waters of the Kooskooskee River, a branch of the Columbia, three hundred and forty miles." The proposed route is evidently based on the *Summary Statement of Distances* compiled by Lewis and Clark.[1] A railway across the Rocky Mountains was one of Hall J. Kelley's dreams, and to him it seemed an entirely simple proposition; but his contemporaries thought it as visionary as a railway to the moon. The project was finally reduced to practicable terms by Asa Whitney, a New York merchant, who addressed a memorial to Congress in 1845, embodying his plan. He proposed to finance the railroad out of land sales

and petitioned for a grant sixty miles wide along the entire route. The settlers who came in to purchase the land would furnish the business on which the company might depend for future revenues. "It is proposed to establish an entirely new system of settlement, on which the hopes of success are based, and upon which all depend. The settler on the line of the road would, so soon as his house or cabin were up and a crop in, find employment to grade the road; the next season, when his crop would have ripened, there would be a market for it at his door, by those in the same situation as himself the season before; if any surplus, he would have the road at low tolls to take it to market; and if he had in the first instance paid for his land, the money would go back, either directly or indirectly, for labor and materials for the work. So that in one year the settler would have his home, with settlement and civilization surrounding, a demand for his labor, a market at his door for his produce, a railroad to communicate with civilization and markets, without having cost one dollar. And the settler who might not have means in money to purchase the land, his labor on the road and a first crop would give him that means, and he, too, would in one year have his home with the same advantages and as equally independent." [2]

By widely distributed lyceum lectures and unceasing newspaper agitation, Whitney created a general demand for transportation to the Pacific, for he diplomatically varied the route according to the prepossessions of the audience he was addressing. His first project was a railroad from Milwaukee on Lake

Michigan through Prairie du Chien to Portland, Oregon; but in deference to Southern interests, he later proposed that the line should run from Memphis on the Mississippi through New Mexico to San Francisco. Sectional feeling was quite evident in the Congressional debates. Southern representatives demanded that the road should connect Charleston with San Diego, while members from the Northern states held that this national boon should not fail to advantage Chicago and St. Louis.

Meantime the discovery of gold in California had rendered some form of transportation a necessity. The prairie schooners of the emigrants soon determined the shortest route to California, and a well-defined trail from Westport Landing to Salt Lake *via* South Pass, and thence by the Humboldt and Truckee rivers to the Sacramento Valley, indicated the line of least resistance. The overland road was described in 1860 as "a great thoroughfare, broad and well-worn as a European turnpike or a Roman military route, and undoubtedly the best and the longest natural highway in the world."[3] Mail-coaches had been running from St. Joseph to Salt Lake since 1850, with the aid of a mail subsidy from the government. In 1859 the stage line was in the hands of Russell, Majors, and Waddell, ex-army contractors, who enjoyed an annual subsidy of $190,000. The heavy Concord coaches ran night and day, six miles an hour, stopping only to change the mule teams at Fort Kearney, Fort Laramie, Fort Bridger, and for food and drink at certain "stations" between these points. The Wells Fargo Express Company financed the route

from Salt Lake to San Francisco. The usual schedule time between St. Joseph and San Francisco was three weeks, though it often exceeded this by two or three days. The charge for fare and twenty-five pounds of luggage was $175 to Salt Lake, — thence to San Francisco, $150. A more rapid mail service was furnished by the famous Pony Express, a relay system of mounted mail-carriers, who made the trip from St. Joseph on the Missouri to Placerville, California, in eight days. This was a desperate business for man and horse, but with a letter rate of $5 per sheet, it paid expenses and was maintained from 1852 to 1860.

When gold was discovered in the northern Rockies, Ben Holladay, a Missourian, opened a stage route from Atchison to Denver, across the Wasatch Range to Salt Lake, and thence north to Idaho and Oregon, a line that footed up 2240 miles. At Portland, Holladay's stages were met by steamships which he had purchased to carry mail and passengers from British Columbia to Mexico. It was a vast scheme of transportation without which the mines of the Northwest could hardly have been operated, and the revenue as well as the expenditures ran up to figures regarded as stupendous in those days. The mail contracts alone amounted to $650,000 per annum. The southern overland route from Fort Smith, the head of navigation on the Arkansas, *via* El Paso to San Diego, was well patronized by emigrants from the Gulf States, and this, too, had its stage line (1858) financed by Wells of the Wells Fargo Company.

It was a hazardous business for all concerned.

The risk of capture by Indian bands or by more civilized highwaymen was serious, and the losses in property alone were reckoned by millions. The cost of maintaining the draft animals at the numerous relay posts was heavy, for grain had to be hauled from Missouri or from Salt Lake, and hay and fuel were often packed a hundred miles over the desert. Reckoning also the wages paid to the men and boys employed, to say nothing of the salaried officials, the output mounted to $10,000 and $20,000 a month, and frequently exceeded the revenue. Firm after firm failed, giving way to some larger combination. The Russell, Majors, and Waddell line passed into the hands of Ben Holladay (1862). The Wells Fargo management bought out Holladay (1865) and established a gigantic transportation system reaching from the Missouri to the Pacific and from Sante Fé to the Columbia, — the Overland Mail Company. Samuel Bowles, who made his journey "Across the Continent" in 1865, estimated that the various stage lines employed from nine to ten thousand wagons, sixteen thousand horses and mules, ten thousand men, and fifty thousand cattle.

The overland stage was a boon to the gold-seekers and to the travelling public for a score of years, and it offered opportunity for many a thrifty Mormon or stranded fur trader to accumulate a tidy fortune by furnishing poor food and worse whiskey to the wayfarer; but it was destined to give place to the transcontinental railroad. During the decade 1849 to 1859, surveys were made of the various routes established by fur traders and emigrants, without reach-

ing any final conclusion. Simpson, of the United States Topographical Survey, who had explored the Zuñi route from Fort Smith to the Rio Grande, the Sante Fé route from Fort Leavenworth, and the Salt Lake route along the North Platte, thought the southern project the most practicable. Texas and New Mexico offered no serious obstacles to construction, for the grades were light, and there was little snow even in winter. But other considerations than the difficulties of construction must have weight in the ultimate decision; the openings for settlement and cultivation must be taken into account, if the road was ever to be profitable. In these respects the southern route offered less than the line recently explored by McClellan and by Lieutenant Mullan from the Great Lakes to Puget Sound. Here, too, the Missouri would serve for the transportation of materials and supplies, while the Cascade Range could furnish abundant timber. The central route so eagerly urged by Benton and Fremont was thought impracticable by Simpson, Gunnison, and Beckwith. The grades they believed beyond the skill of railroad engineers, and the snows fell so heavily in the Wasatch Range and the Sierras as to preclude winter travel. Simpson, indeed, thought a railroad through the Cordilleran area impracticable. Two thousand miles of track built at the rate of one hundred miles a year would require twenty years for completion. Meantime, the portion first built would have rotted out twice over. He advocated a Central American canal as the "great political, commercial, financial, physico-scientific, moral and religious problem of the age." [4]

The central route had been explored by Fremont in 1843–1844 and again in 1845–1846, by Stansbury in 1849, by Gunnison in 1853, by Beckwith in 1854, and by Simpson in 1859, and although they differed on many points, all agreed that the South Pass was the most feasible means of surmounting the Rockies. Fremont described the South Pass as a "sandy plain, one hundred and twenty miles long" which "conducts by a gradual and regular ascent, to the summi about seven thousand feet above the sea," so that the traveller, "without being reminded of any change by toilsome ascents, suddenly finds himself on the waters which flow to the Pacific Ocean." [5] The crossing of the Wasatch Range and the Sierras, he acknowledged to be the really serious problem.

While engineers were discussing grades and construction materials, and politicians were endeavoring to reconcile sectional interests, the miners and ranchmen from Kansas to California were clamoring for improved means of transportation. A Pacific railroad, as Bowles put it, was "the hunger, the prayer, the hope" of all the settlers west of the Missouri. Both the Democratic and the Republican platforms of 1860 declared that a transcontinental railway was "imperatively demanded by the interests of the whole country," but not till the secession of the slave states left the representatives of the North in control of Congress, was the central route determined on, with Omaha as the point of departure. The Congressional sanction was hailed with enthusiasm all along the emigrant trail. The merchants of St. Louis and the farmers of Kansas and Nebraska were

the first to feel the advantages of the new transportation system; but the Mormons in Utah were no less convinced of its beneficence. Brigham Young took out contracts in behalf of the church for building the line through Mormon country, and many a fortune was made in the furnishing of timber and supplies, while the Saints contributed no small quota of the labor employed. The business men of San Francisco subscribed $1,000,000 of stock and immediately set about building the Central Pacific Railroad over the Sierras and across the Great American Desert to the Great Salt Lake,—quite the most difficult portion of the route. The city of the Golden Gate subscribed $400,000 of stock, Sacramento $300,000, and Placer County $250,000, while the state of California put in $5,500,000 of seven per cent bonds. Labor was provided by the importation of Chinamen under wage contracts at much lower rates than would have brought in white workmen.

The Union Pacific and the Central Pacific railways met at Ogden on May 10, 1869, and the link between the two oceans was complete. The great undertaking could not have been achieved by private capital alone. The construction costs exceeded all calculations, and the Federal government was obliged to come to the aid of this national enterprise. The second mortgage bonds of the Company to the amount of $65,000,000 were guaranteed by the United States, the Federal treasury being made responsible for the payments on interest and principal. An even more serious draft upon the country's future resources was conceded in the land grant. Alternate

sections of public land, within a tract twenty miles in width, were assigned along the right of way as construction proceeded, a grant which amounted in the end to 23,500,000 acres, an area equal to that of Indiana. In so doing, Congress handed over to this vast transportation system effectual control of the destinies of the region which it served. The ultimate results of this hostage to monopoly could not then be foreseen.

The Homestead Act

The pioneers from Kentucky and Tennessee were entirely familiar with the "cabin right." Virginia and the Carolinas had offered lands beyond the Appalachians at a mere nominal charge to settlers who could show a house built and corn planted at the end of a year from the date of occupation. Senator Benton, the ardent champion of the frontier, was heartily in favor of this generous policy. When he first came to Missouri, and "saw land exposed to sale to the highest bidder, and lead mines and salt mines reserved from sale, and rented out for the profit of the Federal treasury [he] felt repugnance to the whole system, and determined to make war upon it whenever [he] should have the power." [6] Unfortunately, the eloquent senator from Missouri lost his seat just as the question of the free distribution of the public lands became a live issue in the Senate. Daniel Webster, the Whig leader, was equally in favor of making over the public domain to the people. In January 22, 1850, shortly before his final withdrawal from the Senate, he introduced a resolution in behalf of the quarter-section grant.

It was in the House, however, where the Northern and Western states had a working majority, that the free soil agitation was fully felt. Andrew Johnson of Tennessee introduced a homestead bill in 1845. Its objects were defined by Horace Greeley in the *New York Tribune* as "the securing to every man, as nearly as may be, a chance to work for and earn a living; secondly, the discouragement of land monopoly and speculation, and the creation of a universally landholding People." In 1850 a second bill was brought before the House, this time with the indorsement of the Committee on Agriculture. It was eloquently defended by Brown of Mississippi, a Democrat, who urged that "a fixed and permanent home should be placed within the reach of every citizen, however humble his condition in life." [7] There was much talk of the patriotism of the simple, sturdy old farmers, and the interests of "the honest, hard-fisted, warm-hearted, toiling millions," neglected in the zeal of some legislators to please the rich and great. Other Democrats and Southerners followed in the same vein. The public domain, purchased by the blood and treasure of the whole people, belonged to the people by right and should be placed at the disposition of any man who would settle thereon, without charge. The national inheritance must be rescued "from the grasp of jobbers and pirates" who were speculating on the necessities of the poor.

On the other hand, the proposal was denounced as demagogism by Morse of Louisiana, as "one of the grossest schemes for corrupting the people that had ever been devised." The public property was being

given away "for the purpose of making voters." [8] Hubbard of Alabama argued that the minimum rate of $1.25 per acre already guaranteed to actual settlers by the Preëmption Act was not excessive, and that a more reasonable reform would be the classification of the agricultural land still available and the graduation of the price according to real productivity. The flat charge of $1.25 per acre for the whole area, whether the "richest bottom lands or the poorest wire-grass pine barrens," was the real injustice. The protest of Eastern representatives that land sales constituted the principal source of revenue for the Federal government was answered by the assertion that the revenue was unnecessary and that the burden was unequally distributed. Johnson of Arkansas insisted that "the people of the new states have contributed more, in proportion to their population, to the support of this Government than any other people in the United States. * * * When a man comes to settle among us, he is compelled to pay his money into the Treasury in order to get a spot on which to live; and the money which is thus paid by the settlers is carried out of the state and expended elsewhere." [9]

Until 1854 the homestead policy was not regarded as a party issue. It was indorsed by Whigs such as Lewis Cass of Michigan and by Democrats such as McMullen of Virginia. Nor could it be called a sectional question, though it awakened the liveliest interest in the West and among the men who were looking forward to settlement of the public lands. But as it became apparent that the most desirable portions of

the unclaimed lands lay north of the Missouri Compromise line, sectional jealousies were awakened. When the Homestead Bill reached the Senate in March of 1854, it was referred to the Committee on Public Lands, and even when reported back with the recommendation to pass, action was deferred from week to week, until Gwin of California charged the opposition with using adroit and underhand tactics to defeat a measure which they dared not fight in the open. Then Johnson of Arkansas, now sitting in the Senate, spoke his mind. He had become convinced that the policy was "tinctured so strongly with abolitionism" that no Southerner could vote for it. To pass a homestead act before the Kansas-Nebraska Bill had become law would be to offer a premium to all the rest of the world to settle that country excepting only slave owners. The bill finally passed the Senate by a vote of thirty-six to eleven, but with amendments so obnoxious to the temper of the House that that body refused to concur. Once again, in June of 1860, the two houses agreed upon a homestead bill providing that any citizen of the United States, or foreigner intending to become such, might take up a quarter section of unappropriated public land, settle thereon, and when he could prove residence of five years' duration, acquire absolute title. The Senate's contention that a cash payment of twenty-five cents an acre be required, was accepted by the House after serious protest; but even so, the opposition of the slave interests was so strong that President Buchanan felt justified in vetoing the bill.

The Republican party was fully committed to the principle of free land and free labor, and its victory in the presidential election of 1860 indicated that the majority of the people had adopted these foundation principles of liberty. When the slave states had withdrawn their representatives from the Federal legislature, the Homestead Bill passed both houses without opposition and, receiving the signature of President Lincoln, became law, May 20, 1862. No acreage charge was made, and any foreigner might file upon public land after declaring his intention of becoming a citizen of the United States. Homestead entries proved immensely popular, attracting settlers not only from the states east of the Mississippi River, but from European lands. Quarter-section farms to the amount of 27,000,000 acres were claimed between 1867 and 1874, and 168,000 farmers' families, American, German, and Scandinavian, settled in the Far West. The revenue from sales dwindled, but the government soon realized an offsetting advantage in the enhancement of the general wealth and in the higher standard of citizenship. The long struggle between forced and free labor, between land monopoly and the self-employed landowner, had ended in the triumph of the ideal American type—the homestead farmer.

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NOTES

VOLUME II

Part III

Chapter I

[1] *Account of Louisiana*, 15.

[2] The cultivation of sugar had been abandoned as unprofitable shortly after the Spanish occupation, but it was revived in 1796 by Etienne Boré, a planter of New Orleans, who succeeded in getting from his boilers a well-granulated grade.

[3] *Account of Louisiana*, 8.

[4] *Account of Louisiana*, 9.

[5] The French word *prairie* is defined as "land without forest growth."

[6] In 1819 Opelousa sent 12,000 head of cattle to New Orleans, where they sold for $35 a head.

[7] Sibley, Letter, 3, 6–7.

[8] Sibley set out in March, 1803, and sent in his report April 5, 1806. It is accompanied by Dunbar's report of the Washita expedition which was carried through in the autumn of 1804. *Am. State Papers*, Indian Affairs, I, 721–743.

[9] Sibley, Letter of August 15, 1803.

[10] *An Account of the Red River in Louisiana*, drawn from the report of Messrs. Freeman and Custis to the War Office, exists in pamphlet form in the Bancroft Collection. Dr. James in *Long's Expedition*, IV, 66–70, gives an account of this adventure, evidently based on Freeman's report. The full report of this expedition seems never to have been printed.

[11] An exhaustive census taken in 1806 for the Territory of Orleans returned a total population of 52,998; 26,069 whites, 23,574 slaves and 3355 free blacks. Of the white population, 13,500 were creoles, — French for the most part, and but 3500 Americans. The remainder were Spaniards, Irish, English, and Germans. By the census of 1810, the population of New Orleans was 17,242, that of the Territory of Orleans 76,556.

[12] Flint, *Recollections of the Last Ten Years*, 300.

[13] Nuttall, *Journal*, 313.

[14] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 309.

[15] Nuttall, *Journal*, 309.

[16] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 326.

[17] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 348.

[18] Olmsted, *Cotton Kingdom*, 358.

[19] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 329.

Chapter II

[1] All travellers of this period refer to the devastation wrought by the earthquake of 1811. In 1815 Congress made an appropriation for the sufferers at New Madrid.

[2] Nuttall, *Journal*, 78.

[3] Nuttall, *Journal*, 77.

[4] Lead that sold for 7 cents a pound at Herculaneum brought 18 cents here, not more than two hundred miles down the river. Salt was $5 per bushel, sugar 31 cents a pound, flour $11 a barrel, pork $6, and beef $5 per cwt.

[5] Most of these grants were invalidated by the act of 1847–1848 on the score of indefiniteness.

[6] Nuttall, *Journal*, 207.

[7] Nuttall, *Journal*, 218.

[8] Schoolcraft, *Lead Mines of Missouri*, 249–251.

[9] Thwaites, *Lewis and Clark*, I, 24.

[10] Bradbury, *Travels into the Interior of North America*,

[11] Brackenridge, *Journal*, 36–37.

[12] Brackenridge, *Journal*, 48.

[13] Long's *Expedition*, I, 146.

[14] Long's *Expedition*, IV, 33.

[15] Schoolcraft, *Lead Mines*, 223.

[16] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 237.

[17] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 201–202.

[18] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 249.

[19] Flint, *Letters from America*, 129–130.

[20] Flagg, *The Far West*, 208, 229.

[21] Flagg, *The Far West*, 208–210.

[22] There were sixteen grist-mills and eight sawmills in Washington County, in 1819. — Schoolcraft.

[23] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 232.

[24] Schoolcraft, *Lead Mines*, 65.

[25] The possible yield Schoolcraft ascertained to be 82 per cent.

[26] Schoolcraft, *Lead Mines*, 138–139.

[27] The navigation of the St. Francis was interrupted by a raft at St. Michael, but this removed, it would be navigable five hundred miles to the Mississippi and might furnish a direct outlet from the lead mines.

[28] Schoolcraft, *Lead Mines*, 41.

[29] Flint *Last Ten Years*, 105.

[30] According to Schoolcraft, "The boards and planks are taken in rafts from Olean [on the upper Alleghany] to the mouth of the Ohio, and from thence carried in keel boats and barges to St. Louis, where they are worth sixty dollars per thousand feet." — *Lead Mines*, 226.

[31] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 103.

[32] The down-stream traffic was in pig and bar lead, shot of all sizes, whiskey, flour, wheat, corn, hemp, flax, tow cloth, horses, beef, pork, dried venison, deerskins, furs and peltries, butter, pecans. There was a marked increase in the principal articles for the prosperous period following the War.

Productions	1815	1816	1817
Bacon and hams, cwt.	7000	13,000	18,000
Butter, lbs.	——	500	1,800
Cotton, bales	60,000	65,000	65,000
Corn, bushels	120,000	130,000	140,000
Flour, barrels	75,000	98,000	190,000
Molasses, gallons	500,000	800,000	1,000,000
Pork, barrels	8,000	9,700	22,000
Sugar, hhds.	5,000	7,300	28,000
Taffia, gallons	150,000	300,000	400,000
Tobacco, hhds.	5,000	7,300	28,000
Wheat, bushels	——	——	95,000
Whiskey, gallons	150,000	230,000	250,000

— Schoolcraft, *Lead Mines*, 265.

[33] Schoolcraft, *Lead Mines*, 265.

[34] A "sawyer is a large tree which has tumbled into the river above, and got fastened by its roots in the bottom, with its top pointed downwards, and just appearing above the level of the water, or it may terminate a foot or two below, so that its locality can only be told by an experienced hand by the ripple created in the water. This tree is continually forced downward by the current, which is still not strong enough to tear it out, and suffers it occasionally to recoil, so that a regular rotary motion is kept up, which is performed once in ten or fifteen minutes; and if a boat be passing over it at the time it has overcome the pressure of the current and is recoiling to its original position, the destruction of the boat is inevi-

table. The power of this engine of destruction is that of elasticity, which is here brought into operation by the pressure of water against a column of live wood eighty or ninety feet in length, the bottom being fastened, and the column inclined at an angle of about eighty degrees, leaving the top at liberty to play like a whip-stalk. When the tree does not reach within two or three feet of the surface of the water, they are called *sleeping sawyers*, and these are the most dangerous, for they cannot be seen. It was on one of these that the steamboat *Franklin* struck, and sunk, a few miles below St. Genevieve.

"'*Planters* are trees in a similar situation, but firmly set, and having no motion. *Snags* are small trees, or limbs of large trees, sticking up in the river, and may either be fixed or have motion.'"—Schoolcraft, *Lead Mines*, 223–224.

[35] Flagg, *The Far West*, I, 113.

[36] Flagg, *The Far West*, I, 84.

[37] Flint, *Last Ten Years*, 105.

[38] Flagg, *Far West*, I, 145.

[39] Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, I, 21.

[40] Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, I, 692.

[41] Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, I, 102–103.

[42] Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, I, 147–148.

[43] Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, I, 8–9.

Chapter III

[1] Fowler, *Journal*, 151.

[2] Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, I, 236.

[3] J. J. Warner, *Reminiscences of Early California*, Ms. in Bancroft Collection.

[4] Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, II, 147.

[5] Josiah Gregg was engaged in the Santa Fé trade, from 1829–1839.

[6] Pattie, *Narrative*, 145, 150, 156, 160.

Chapter IV

[1] The boundary between Louisiana and New Spain was defined as follows: along the Sabine River to the thirty-second parallel, north on the ninety-fourth meridian to Red River, along this stream, to the one hundredth meridian, from this point due north to the Arkansas River, then following the south bank of the Arkansas to the forty-second parallel, and thence directly west to the South Sea.

[2] Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, II, 619.

[3] The Mexican grant was set at one hundred and fifty miles square. Austin was intrusted with the government of his colony, and the people were to enjoy immunity from import duties for a term of six years. In consideration of his services as *empressario*, he was later accorded additional grants north of San Antonio.

[4] These are the more generous terms accorded in the modification of the general law adopted by the state of Coahuila and Texas in 1825.

[5] Rockwell, *Spanish and Mexican Law*, 624.

[6] The decree of 1829 proposed compensation to slave owners, but the Texans believed, with reason, that the money would not be available for many years and might never be paid, and they cited in justification of their own labor system that Mexican landowners employed *peons* who, under the pretext of debtor contracts, were virtually slaves. The master might recover his *peons* by force if they attempted escape and beat them if they were unruly, while the wages paid (from one to three reals a day) gave them no better subsistence than was generally provided for negro slaves. Some of the American slave owners returned to their homes in Louisiana and Arkansas. Others evaded the law by apprenticing their negroes for a term of ninety-nine years.

[7] Parton, *Aaron Burr*, II, 319.

[8] Kennedy, *Texas*, 117–118.

Part IV

Chapter I

[1] Lumber is now selling at from $50 to $90 per 1000 feet, "and such is the market that no considerable *reductions* of these prices can ever be reasonably expected."

[2] "I have been familiar with these mountains, for three years, and have crossed them often, and at various points, between the latitude 42 and 54. I have, therefore, the means to know something about them, and a right to oppose my knowledge to the suppositions of strangers. I say, then, that nothing is more easily passed than these mountains. Wagons and carriages may cross them in a state of nature without difficulty, and with little delay in the day's journey." Pilcher's Report, 1830.

[3] This battle, July 18, 1832, is graphically described by Irving in *Captain Bonneville*, Chap. VI.

[4] Smith, Ball, and Tibbetts secured employment with the Hudson's Bay Company.

[5] Wyeth, *Correspondence and Journals*, 178.

[6] Wyeth based his claim to be the originator of the first American settlement in Oregon on his five years of strenuous endeavor and the $20,000 spent in fitting out his two expeditions by land and by sea; also

on the fact that three of the first party and nineteen of the second remained in the territory and took up land. "When I arrived on the lower Columbia in the autumn of 1832 there were no Americans there nor any one having an American feeling. So far as I know there had not been since Mr. Astor retired from the coast."

[7] McLoughlin, *Narrative.*

[8] Kelley states as his reason for choosing this circuitous route his desire to negotiate arrangements for trade in lumber and fish between the Mexican ports and the Columbia River.

[9] Wyeth, *Correspondence and Journals.*

[10] According to Kelley, a copy of the *Manual* had been handed to Dr. McLoughlin by Captain Dominis of the ship *Owyhee*, Boston, 1829.

[11] Young believed that this was a charge trumped up to cover the unwarranted confiscation of his stock of furs worth $20,000. C. M. Walker, his biographer, describes him as "a candid and scrupulously honest man, thorough-going, brave and daring."

[12] Quoted in Kelley, *Narrative of Events and Difficulties*, 50.

[13] Franchère, *Narrative*, 341.

[14] Wyeth, *Correspondence and Journals*, 192.

[15] Two died under the pernicious atmosphere of the white man's civilization, but two set out for the mountains in the following spring. They furnished Catlin subjects for a famous picture.

[16] Daniel Lee, in his *Ten Years in Oregon* (110), states that "a high-wrought account of the visit of these Indians to St. Louis, by some writer in the vicinity, was published in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, New York City, in March, 1833."

[17] Lee and Frost, *Oregon*, 122.

[18] "Along the river we found about a dozen families, mostly French Canadians, who had been hunters in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, or free trappers, and had very lately left that employment and begun to farm, that themselves and families might have a surer support and greater security than they could while following the hazardous life of hunters."—Lee and Frost, *Oregon*, 125.

[19] Lee and Frost, *Oregon*, 125.

[20] Lee and Frost, *Oregon*, 127.

[21] An intermittent fever peculiarly deadly among the Indians broke out in 1829 and spread like a pestilence up the rivers to the remoter villages. According to Kelley, the disease was bred by the "excessive filth and slovenly habits of the English settlement at Vancouver," but that Dr. McLoughlin had wickedly told the Indians it had been scattered on the water by Captain Dominis of the American brig, *Owyhee.* It has been more sanely attributed to the degraded habits and degenerate physique of the natives, and to the turning up of the new soil at Van-

couver and at French Prairie. Wyeth described the situation at Wappatoo Island in 1834. "A mortality has carried off to a man the inhabitants and there is nothing to attest that they ever existed except their decaying houses, their graves, and their unburied bones of which there are heaps. So you see, as the righteous people of New England say, Providence has made room for me and without doing them more injury than I should if I had made room for myself, viz. (by) killing them off." — Wyeth, *Correspondence and Journals*, 149.

[22] Lee and Frost, *Oregon*, 131.

[23] Lee and Frost, *Oregon*, 311.

[24] Lee and Frost, *Oregon*, 150.

[25] Lee and Frost, *Oregon*, 129.

[26] White, *Ten Years in Oregon*, 92.

[27] *American Historical Review*, XIV, 79.

[28] "Among the curiosities of this establishment were the fore wheels, axle tree and thills of a one-horse waggon, said to have been run by the American missionaries from the State of Connecticut through the mountains thus far toward the mouth of the Columbia. It was left here under the belief that it could not be taken through the Blue Mountains. But fortunately for the next that shall attempt to cross the Continent, a safe and easy passage has lately been discovered by which vehicles of the kind may be drawn through to Walla walla."

Editor's Note. When Joseph Meek came through in 1840, he secured the remains of this historic wagon and transported his family therein to Dr. Whitman's station at Walla Walla. — Farnham, *Travels*, I, 322.

[29] Mrs. Whitman, *Journal*, 54.

[30] Mrs. Whitman, *Journal*, 65.

[31] Mrs. Whitman, *Journal*, 149.

[32] The first *engagé* to make the request was Etienne Lucier (1829).

[33] Trade prices were estimated at 80 per cent advance.

[34] On his first return Wyeth addressed a letter to Lewis Cass, then Secretary of War (Dec. 9, 1833), stating, "There are west of the Mts. Many gentlemen and servants of the Hudson's Bay Company who have Indian wives and families and who are desirous of retiring from active life, but they cannot well mingle in society as it is constituted in Great Britain or the United States and enquiring on what terms they might take up land and whether they could be guaranteed at least the value of improvements, in case the American government ever came into possession of this country."

[35] Farnham, *Travels*, I, 287.

[36] Farnham, *Travels*, II, 17.

[37] Hastings, *Oregon and California*, 22.

[38] *American Historical Review*, XIV, 80.

[39] Mrs. Whitman, *Journal*, 148.

[40] Whitman's Letter from the Shawnee Mission, May 27, 1843.

[41] Fremont, *First Expedition*, 133.

[42] Burnet, *Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer*, 142.

[43] Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions, 1886, 24.

[44] McLoughlin, *Narrative*, 203.

[45] Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, I, 13.

[46] Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, I, 13.

[47] In 1825, Dr. McLoughlin was officially informed that the British claim would not be urged for the region south of the Columbia.

[48] The Americans rallied 52 votes in favor and the Canadians 50 against.

[49] One of the mischances that rendered difficult the endeavor of this much-perplexed man to hold to a consistent course was the arrival, a few days after this oath was taken, of an English man-of-war sent by a dilatory ministry to assure British subjects of adequate protection!

[50] Linn's bill was suggested by Jason Lee. It was supported by petitions from citizens of Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Iowa, and from the legislature of Missouri. The bill passed the Senate but failed in the House.

[51] Palmer, *Journal*, 159. Cf 165.

[52] The state resold this property to McLoughlin's heirs for $1000 in 1862.

[53] The McLoughlin Document, 55.

Chapter II

[1] The actual encampment was moved to Kanesville, Iowa, in 1848, and to Florence, Nebraska, in 1854. Keokuk, Iowa, and Independence, Missouri, were occasionally used for large parties

[2] The prescribed outfit for a family of five was one wagon, three yokes of cattle, two cows, two steers, three sheep, one thousand pounds of flour, twenty pounds of sugar, a tent and bedding, seeds, farming tools, and a rifle, an equipment adequate for a long journey.

[3] William Clayton, *Historical Record*, IX, 58.

[4] Careful restrictions were imposed on the use of the scant forests, *e.g.* none fit for building purposes was to be used as fuel.

[5] So Woodruff, quoted by Linn, *The Story of the Mormons*, 396.

[6] Stansbury, *Expedition to the Great Salt Lake*, 142.

[7] Kelley, *Excursion to California*, 229.

[8] Each immigrant signed a contract agreeing that "on our arrival in the Great Salt Lake Valley, we will hold ourselves, our time and our labor, subject to the appropriation of the Perpetual Emigration Fund Company, until the full cost of our emigration is paid, with interest if required."

[9] Cf. Report of the Parliamentary Commission. Also Charles Dickens, *The Commercial Traveler*, *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1862.

[10] Bancroft, *Utah*, 420.

[11] Brigham Young's order of January 14, 1847. Tullidge, *Salt Lake City*, 638.

[12] Orson Pratt, quoted by Linn, 403.

[13] Letter to Orson Pratt, October 14, 1849.

[14] Quoted by Tullidge, *Salt Lake City*.

[15] Stansbury states (*Expedition to Great Salt Lake*, 130–131) that strict justice was meted out to Saint and Gentile — that Mormon courts were frequently appealed to by Californian emigrants who had quarrelled among themselves, that he knew of one instance where the marshal of Deseret was "despatched with an adequate force, nearly two hundred miles into the western desert, in pursuit of some miscreants who had stolen off with nearly the whole outfit of a party of emigrants." They were overtaken and brought back and the property restored.

[16] Fort Bridger had been purchased by the church as an emigrant station, 1853.

[17] Kelley, *Excursion to California*, I, 226–227.

[18] Stansbury, *Expedition*, 83.

[19] Stansbury, *Expedition*, 223.

[20] Stansbury, *Expedition*, 230.

[21] Gunnison, *Great Salt Lake*, Pt. II, Chap. VIII.

[22] Jules Remy, *Journey to Salt Lake City*, I, 196.

[23] Remy, I, 196, 197.

[24] Remy, I, 214.

[25] Remy, I, 217.

[26] Chandless, *Visit to Salt Lake*, 54.

[27] Chandless, *Salt Lake*, 35.

[28] Burton, *City of the Saints*, 174.

[29] Burton, *City of the Saints*, 198, 441.

[30] Burton, *City of the Saints*, 216.

[31] Simpson, *Explorations*, 136.

[32] Cooke, *New Mexico and California*.

[33] *E.g.* Captain Brown carried back three thousand dollars with which he planted his stake on the Weber.

Chapter III

[1] White, *Ten Years in Oregon*, 119.

[2] In 1841, according to Wilkes, the export of beaver was two thousand skins at $2 each; sea-otter, five hundred skins at $30 each; elk and deer, three thousand skins at from fifty cents to $1 apiece.

[3] De Mofras states that, in 1841, two thousand horses were sent to New Mexico by this route. They were purchased for $8 to $10, sold for $40 to $50.

[4] A census of foreigners taken in 1840 enumerated sixteen foreigners at Yerba Buena, all Americans, thirty-one at San José, mostly British subjects, ten at Branciforte, American hunters and sailors, thirty at Monterey, English and American merchants, as many more of the same class at Santa Barbara, twenty-three at Los Angeles, American traders and French fruit growers, but only seven at San Diego, the former resort of the drogher ships. The urban population in 1846 was between four and five thousand, *e.g.* San José 600 to 800, Los Angeles 1250, Branciforte 470, Santa Barbara 900, Monterey 500, Yerba Buena 800.

[5] *American Historical Review*, 14 : 77, 89.

[6] Simpson held that under the Convention of 1790, Britain might settle any part of the coast between 42°, the United States boundary, and 38° the northernmost Spanish occupation.

[7] W. H. Davis, *Sixty Years*, 65.

[8] Wilkes, *Expedition*, V, 158, 182.

[9] J. J. Warner printed an article on California and Oregon, in *Colonial Magazine*, 1841, describing advantages of California and proposing a railroad to the Columbia.

[10] *E.g.* Farnham's letters.

[11] Borthwick, *Three Years in California*, 148.

[12] Fremont, *Second Expedition*, 232–236.

[13] Tehachapi Pass, according to Bancroft.

[14] Remy, I, 53.

[15] Hastings, *Oregon and California*, 126.

[16] Cooke, *Conquest* of New Mexico, and California, 61.

[17] Cooke, *Conquest*, 34.

[18] Cooke, *Conquest*, 45.

[19] Jones, *Land Titles*, 279.

[20] Jones' report set aside any consideration of the claims of the Franciscans and the Indians. The first were disproved by the law of 1813 by which the missionaries were given only a ten years' usufruct of the tracts

tilled under their direction. The report recommended that in the case of the surviving missions, the church, the priest's residence, and two hundred *varas* of land should be granted to Catholic parishes, any other buildings and land to be assigned to the county for the use of public schools, in accordance with the Act of 1833. The rights of the Indians in the mission lands had been recognized both by Spanish and Mexican enactments, but the intent of this legislation had been negatived by the maladministration of recent years. "The number of subjugated Indians is now too small, and the lands they occupy too insignificant in amount for their protection to the extent of the law to cause any considerable molestation." Title to abandoned Indian holdings should properly lapse to the state. Spanish law recognized no rights to the land appertaining to the wild tribes of the interior.

[21] Quoted by Charles Robinson in his *History of Kansas*, 38.

[22] The new-comers were misled by the extravagant prices paid for town lots during the gold craze, when land in San Francisco and Sacramento sold at one thousand dollars per acre. Large tracts of rural land were offered by American speculators at from thirty-seven to seventy-five cents per acre in 1857. — Seyd, *California and its Resources*.

[23] Chandless, *Visit to Salt Lake*, 315.

[24] This report reached Washington in September, '48, and was immediately printed by the *Baltimore Sun*, September 20.

[25] Quoted in Schoonover, *General Sutter*, 180.

[26] The Aspinwall contract provided for an annual subsidy of $199,000 for carrying the mail from Panama to San Francisco and Portland, Oregon. Law secured $290,000 per year for the New York to Chagres service.

[27] Butler King estimated that 15,000 foreigners reached California in 1849 (10,000 of them Mexicans), and 40,000 Americans. The total white population in 1850 was reported by the census to be 115,000.

[28] "These are the most primitive kind of contrivances for grinding quartz. They are circular places, ten or twelve feet in diameter, flagged with flat stones, and in these the quartz is crushed by two large heavy stones dragged round and round by a mule harnessed to a horizontal beam, to which they are also attached. The quartz is already broken up into small pieces before being put into the raster, and a constant supply of water is necessary to facilitate the operation, the stuff, while being ground, having the appearance of a rich white mud." This is mixed with quicksilver to take up the gold, and the amalgam is reduced to its native elements in a retort. — Borthwick, *Three Years in California*, 244–245.

[29] Hittell, *Resources of California*, III, 133–135. The Princeton, Josephine, Pine Tree, and Mariposa mines were profitable for a few years, but were not worked after 1865.

[31] Kelley, *Excursion to California*, II, 268–269.

[31] Tyson, *Geology and Industrial Resources of California*, complains in his preface that the administration saw fit to delay publication of his

conclusions while rushing the hasty generalizations of the Georgia senator before the public.

[32] Tyson, *California*, 38.

[33] Shaw, *Golden Dreams*, 120.

[34] Exceptions to this rule are Shaw's *Golden Dreams and Waking Realities*, Carson's *Early Recollections of the Mines*, Helper's *Land of Gold*. On the other hand, Simpson's *Three Weeks in the Gold Mines* reads like a promoter's prospectus.

[35] Carson, *Early Recollections*, 8.

[36] Kelley, *Excursion*, II, 244.

[37] Kelley, *Excursion*, II, 243.

[38] Cf. Seyd's figures, *California*, 67.

[39] A saving of 2 per cent in freights and insurance. — Seyd. More than a million dollars in silver was sent from Mexico on English account to be trans-shipped to Canton.

[40] The miners' code gave permanent control of a water supply to the first appropriator, and he was required to make no compensatory payment to the community. A dated notice stating the amount of water preëmpted was all that was necessary to establish a claim to the flow of a given stream.

[41] A miner's inch is the amount of water which escapes in a working day through an orifice an inch square under a pressure of six inches of flow.

[42] Bancroft estimated the capital invested in ditches and flumes and reservoirs in the seventeen mining counties of California at $2,294,000 for 1854 and $6,341,700 for 1855. Seyd gives the figure $4,587,000 for the eight placer-mining counties in 1858. Hittell's estimate for 1871 is $20,000,000. The investment was a hazardous one, necessitating high returns. The wages of labor constituted a heavy item of expense, the wooden flumes needed constant repairing, and iron piping was not to be had in the first years. When the subsidiary placers were exhausted, the waterworks were almost valueless. According to Hittell's *Resources of California*, there were, in 1871, five hundred and sixteen mining ditches with a total approximate length of forty-eight hundred miles.

[43] Quartz mining is one of the most uncertain of investments, since it is quite impossible to predicate the location or the yield of a vein. There is no business in which it is easier to waste money by inexperience, carelessness or gullibility. Huntley's *California* gives an English investor's shrewd opinion of the chances of success.

According to Ashburner, of the United States Geological Survey, there were, in 1858, at least two hundred and eighty quartz mills in California erected at a cost of $3,000,000; but no more than forty or fifty quartz mines were paying expenses. These were very heavy. The excavation and timbering of tunnels and shafts, hoisting gear and engines, pumps for the removal of water, stamp mills, roasting furnaces, and amal-

gamators, made a sum total of cost which could only be made good by the richest veins. Philip's *Mining and Metallurgy* gives the following data for the yield of the four largest stamp-mills: —

	Yield per Ton of Quartz	*Cost of Treating per Ton*
Mariposa.	The Benton, $8.98	$1.04
Tuolomne.	The Union, $50.00	$3.81
Calaveras.	Crystal, $80.00	$8.31
Nevada.	Gold Hill, $70.00	$2.91

[44] Tyson, *California*, 39.

[45] Hittell, *History of California*, III, Chap. XI.

[46] If a foreigner was working for an American, his employer paid the fee.

[47] Emigration figures of '54, 24,000; '55, 23,000; '57, 17,000.

[48] The United States mint was not established in San Francisco until 1856.

[49] Two hundred and forty-six vessels put into San Francisco in 1856 with a total tonnage of 209,902. Eighty-one of these came from New York and forty-four from other Atlantic ports; forty-two hailed from China and twenty-two from Great Britain. The freights paid on this traffic amounted to $4,592,104, more by $500,000 than in 1855, but less than half the sum for 1853. ($11,752,104. — Seyd.)

[50] Tyson, *California*, XIII.

[51] In 1880 Miller and Lux owned 750,000 acres in California, 100,000 cattle, and 80,000 sheep. — Bancroft, XIX, 67.

[52] A native three-year-old weighed six hundred pounds and was worth but $50, whereas a three-quarter grade animal weighing fifteen hundred pounds would sell for $300.

[53] Thousands died of starvation, and hundreds of thousand were slaughtered for the hides. There were 262,000 cattle in California in 1850, 1,000,000 in 1860, 2,000,000 in 1862, and but 820,000 in 1870. — Hittell, *Industrial Resources*.

[54] The wool clip of California was 170,000 pounds in 1854, 300,000 pounds in 1855, 3,260,000 in 1860, 6,445,000 in 1865, 19,700,000 in 1870, 23,000,000 in 1872, 30,000,000 in 1873. In the Federal census for 1870, California was reported as possessing the finest herds of sheep in the United States and producing the most wool.

[55] Years of drought: 1849–1850, 1852–1853, 1861–1862, 1867–1868, 1871–1872, 1877–1878, 1880–1881.

[56] In 1884 the Supreme Court of the state decided that it was unlawful to so work a mine as to injure adjacent property.

[57] The tilled area was 1,774,000 acres in 1866, 2,992,000 in 1870, and 4,500,000 in 1874. Of this acreage, one-third was in the San Joaquin

valley, one-third on the south coast, and the remaining third north of the Bay, pretty equally divided between the coast and the Sacramento valley.

[58] The average annual rainfall on the north coast was 70 inches; at Cape Mendocino, 40 inches; at San Francisco, 22 inches; at Monterey, 16 inches; at San Diego, 10 inches. The precipitation was less at corresponding points in the interior.

[59] Years of extreme drought, 1850–1851, 1863–1864, 1876–1877.

[60] Two, five, and ten ploughs were used in a gang, each making a furrow from eight to ten inches wide and from four to five inches deep. By this invention, the cost of ploughing was reduced from $3 to forty cents an acre.

[61] The average yield was sixteen bushels in 1867, eighteen in 1868, sixteen in 1869, and thirteen in 1870.

[62] In 1871 there were nine hundred and fifteen irrigating ditches in California, and water was supplied to 90,344 acres, about one-fiftieth of the total area under cultivation. — Hittell, *Resources of California*, 268.

[63] In 1848 there were 200,000 grape-vines in California, the large vineyards being in the neighborhood of Los Angeles, in the San Gabriel Valley, and on the Vallejo estate at Sonoma. Little was done by way of improving the old mission stock until 1853–1856, when some enterprising viticulturists brought Eastern and European vines. The superiority of the foreign grapes both for table use and in the wineries was soon evident, and by 1870 two hundred varieties imported from France, Spain, Germany, and Hungary were successfully produced, the remarkable diversity of soil and climate providing a habitat for each. There were in that year 30,000,000 grape-vines in the state, 25,000,000 in the San Francisco Basin and the interior valleys. The average yield was 12,000 pounds to the acre, double that expected in Germany, France, or the Eastern states. Wineries were maintained in connection with the great vineyards.

[64] The State Agricultural Society, organized in 1854, did much to further the development of the latent resources of California by holding annual fairs, offering premiums for exhibits, calling attention to successful ventures, etc.

[65] The Union Iron Works had their origin in the blacksmith shop of the Donahue brothers, skilled mechanics who began business in 1849. The Pacific Rolling Mills were established in 1865.

[66] In the decade of the Civil War there were 184 sailing vessels and 92 steamers built on the Pacific coast, supplying a total freight capacity of fifty thousand tons.

[67] William Shaw, *Golden Dreams*, 170–171.

[68] William Shaw, *Golden Dreams*, 172.

[69] In 1867 there were fifty thousand Orientals in California, only 35 per cent of these in the mines.

Part V

Chapter I

[1] Olmsted, *Cotton Kingdom*, I, 296.

[2] Olmsted, *Cotton Kingdom*, I, 324.

[3] For an excellent description of the process of planting, cutting, grinding, and boiling, see Olmsted, I, 325–330.

[4] For description of cotton plantation, see Olmsted, II, 176–180. Also Flint, *Recollections of the Past Ten Years*, 325, and Nuttall, *Travels*, 301–302.

[5] Olmsted, *Cotton Kingdom*, II, 151.

[6] Olmsted, I, 373.

[7] Quoted from *The Cotton Planter;* Olmsted, *Cotton Kingdom*, II, 187.

[8] Olmsted, I, 366–367.

[9] Olmsted, II, 4.

[10] Olmsted, II, 12.

[11] Boynton and Mason, *Kansas*, 30, cf. 76.

Chapter II

[1] The principle of popular sovereignty is thus set forth in the Act: "It being the true intent and meaning of this Act not to legislate slavery into any state or territory, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States."

[2] The towns of Lawrence, Topeka, Osawatomie, Pawnee, Grasshopper Falls, Boston, Hampden, and Wabounsee were so founded.

[3] Boynton and Mason, 74.

[4] Boynton and Mason, 13.

[5] Boynton and Mason, 23–24.

[6] Boynton and Mason, 100.

[7] Quoted by Thayer, *The Kansas Crusade*, 185.

[8] The towns of Kickapoo, Leavenworth, Lecompton, Doniphan, and Atchison were founded by the Missourians.

[9] The census of February, 1855, returned a white population of 8601, and 192 slaves. The men entitled to vote were 2905, of whom 1670 were from the Southern states and 1018 from the North; but many of the free state men had gone home for the winter, so that the census did not fairly represent their voting strength. Moreover, the "poor whites" were not usually in favor of slavery.

[10] Of the 6307 votes cast on March 30, 1855, 4908 were found to be illegal.

[11] Robinson, *Kansas*, 229–230.

[12] Higginson, *Ride through Kansas*, 6.

[13] Bowles, *Across the Continent*, 9.

[14] Bowles, *Across the Continent*, 138–139.

Chapter III

[1] Excerpt from the Memorial submitted to Congress in 1846 and printed as Doc. 173, H.R., 29th Congress, 1st sess.

[2] Whitney, *Project for a Pacific Railway*.

[3] Burton, *City of the Saints*, 16.

[4] Simpson, *Explorations*, Appendix.

[5] Fremont, *First Expedition*, 60.

[6] Benton, *Thirty Years' View*, I, 102.

[7] *Congressional Globe*, 1850, Pt. II, 1458.

[8] *Congressional Globe*, 1850, Pt. II, 1459.

[9] *Congressional Globe*, 1853–1854, Pt. I, 553–554.

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